DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 122 106 CE 007 036

AUTHOR Card, J. J.; Shanner, W. M.
TITLE Development of a ROTC/Army Career Commitment Model: Management Summary Report.
INSTITUTION American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, Palo Alto, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY Army Research Inst. for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Arlington, Va.
REPORT NO AIR-43303-3/76-TR
PUB DATE Mar 76
CONTRACT DAHC-19-74-C-0017
NOTE 71p.; For related documents, see CE 007 034-035

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Choice; Careers; *College Programs; *Individual Characteristics; *Military Service; Military Training; Models; Motivation; *Office Occupations; Questionnaires; Vocational Development; Young Adults
IDENTIFIERS Army; *Career Commitment; ROTC

ABSTRACT

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MAY 07 1976

AIR-43303-3/76 TR

ARI Technical Report

Contract DAHC 19-74-C-0017

DEVELOPMENT OF A ROTC/ARMY CAREER COMMITMENT MODEL

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

ED122106

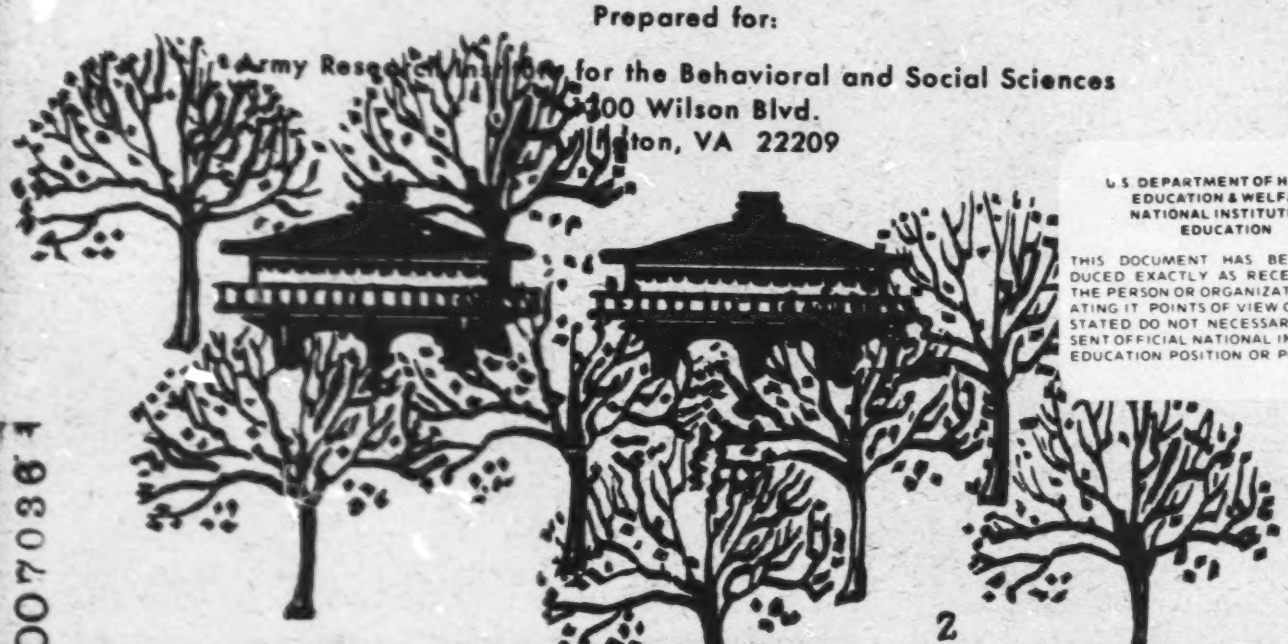
J. J. Card

W. M. Shanner

March 1976

Prepared for:

Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences
1300 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209



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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) Development of a ROTC/Army Career Commitment Model: Management Summary Report		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Abridged Final Report Dec. 1973 - Nov. 1975 6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER AIR-43303-3/76-TR
7. AUTHOR(s) J.J. Card and W.M. Shanner		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s) DAHC 19-74-C-0017
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS American Institutes for Research Palo Alto, California 94302		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences; Arlington, Va. 22209		12. REPORT DATE March 1976 13. NUMBER OF PAGES 62
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS(if different from Controlling Office)		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) Unclassified 15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Career commitment; Career development; Army ROTC		

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AIR

DEVELOPMENT OF A ROTC/ARMY CAREER COMMITMENT MODEL

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

J. J. Card
W. M. Shanner

March, 1976

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research summarized in this report was conducted by a research team consisting of Dr. J.J. Card (Project Director, Months 10-24), Dr. T. Armstrong (Project Director, Months 1-9), Dr. J. Claudy, Dr. R. Frey, and Dr. B. Goodstadt (Research Scientists), Dr. D. Gross (Associate Research Scientist), Mr. A. Romanczuk (Senior Research Associate), Ms. M. Bornstein and Ms. J. Mangione (Research Assistants). The authors wish to acknowledge the contributions made by each of these staff members, particularly that of Dr. Gross, who coordinated both the data collection and computer programming phases of the project.

The project's monitor, Mr. Anthony Castelnovo of the U.S. Army Research Institute, provided staff with encouragement, support, and consulting advice throughout the two-year project.

A seven-member project National Advisory Panel, representing a broad base of backgrounds and expertise, provided expert advice regarding technical aspects of the project and reviewed and critiqued project procedures and products. The members of the Panel were: Colonel Joseph B. Conmy, Dr. John C. Flanagan, Dr. Albert S. Glickman, Dr. Abraham K. Korman, Dr. William M. Shanner, Dr. Donald E. Super, and Dr. David V. Tiedeman.

School personnel at each of the 23 participating high schools and colleges assisted project staff in the data collection phase of the project. They contacted teachers, set up class time, showed project staff around their campuses, and did numerous other logistic chores which helped the project meet the requirements of its sampling plan. In particular the following personnel from the 11 participating colleges' Department of Military Science provided invaluable help to project staff: Colonel Guy I. Tutwiler and Colonel James H. Davis (University of Arkansas), Captain John Kuntzman (University of Central Arkansas), Colonel M. L. Gardner (Carnegie-Mellon University), Major Edward Northrop (Carson-Newman College), Colonel William C. Simpson (Davidson College), Colonel Wolfred K. White and Major John M. Little (Eastern Kentucky University), Lt. Colonel Marion F. White (Marshall University), Colonel Billy C. DuRant and Major David O. Treadwell (North Georgia College), Colonel Glenn A. Hill and Captain Tom A. Keller (California State College, San Jose), Lt. Colonel Burnis L. Hall, Jr. and Major Betty J. Harris (South Carolina State College), Lt. Colonel Lynn F. Coleman (Western Illinois University). These people's assistance is acknowledged with deep appreciation.

Finally, thanks are due to the several thousand high school seniors, college students, and young Army officers who participated in the preliminary interviews, the questionnaire pretest, and the final survey. Without their cooperation, there would have been no report to write.

American Institutes for Research
March, 1976

J. J. Card
Project Director

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This publication summarizes the most important findings for ROTC staff members of a two-year research project entitled "Development of a ROTC/Army Career Commitment Model." The project was conducted by the American Institutes for Research under a contract with the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

The mandate of the study was to develop and test a model of career commitment in the young adult (primarily college) years. The model was to be broad enough to provide the Army with information it could use in recruiting, selecting, and retaining qualified officers via its college-campus Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program.

Career commitment is necessarily a longitudinal process, occurring over time and involving continuous feedback between the individual and his/her home, school, and societal environment. Because of the limited duration of the study, it was not possible to study the career commitment process longitudinally. Instead, representative cross-sections of individuals at different stages of the career commitment process were studied to simulate a longitudinal orientation.

Data on which findings are based were collected from survey questionnaires filled out by nationwide samples of 1089 high school seniors, 1633 college students (754 in ROTC, 879 not in ROTC), and 634 ROTC-graduate Army officers in their period of obligated Army service.

The issues studied were:

> *Who joins ROTC? Why?*
>
> *Which members of ROTC remain on as career Army officers? Why?*

Answers to these questions have become especially important in recent years for several reasons:

1. *the change to an all-volunteer Army.* On January 27, 1973, the military draft was officially suspended by the U.S. Secretary of Defense. It is imperative that the Army continue to recruit and retain qualified men and women as Army officers without the traditional supply furnished directly or indirectly by the draft.

2. *increased public pressure on Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) units.* The turmoil and student protests associated with the Vietnam War led to a reduction in the number of operational ROTC units on college campuses across the country, and to a general "poor image" of ROTC among young people in America. ROTC programs have long been a very important supply source for qualified young Army officers. (Currently, the Army requires approximately 7,000 new officers annually. The U.S. Military Academy at West Point graduates about 700 officers a year. The bulk of the remaining 6,300 officers are provided by Army ROTC programs.)

3. *changing career-related attitudes among young Americans.* A recent report submitted to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (*Work in America.* O'Toole *et al.*, 1973) documented that today's American youth are concerned with commitment to meaningful careers and hard work, but are less willing to submit to authoritarian leadership in work settings. Moreover, the current educational system tends to reinforce questioning and critical behavior, which increases this tendency. These factors potentially affect commitment to a bureaucracy with a strong authoritarian image such as the Army.

Components of the ROTC/Army Career Commitment Process

The study investigated two sequential components of the ROTC/Army career commitment process: (a) *participation*--an individual must decide to join, or participate in, the ROTC/Army career path; and (b) *commitment*--a participant in the career path must intend to remain in the path, and this intention must be borne out by subsequent behavior.

Participation is easily measured because it is, in a sense, dichotomous: either one is a member of ROTC, or one is not. Commitment is not so easily measured because it involves future intentions which are not always clear to the individual and which, even when clear, are subject to modification by future events. In the present study, commitment was measured as a composite of several indicators:

1. behavioral indices of commitment, such as:

   - joining ROTC
   - remaining in ROTC through the senior year in college
   - applying for a Regular Army commission

2. attitudinal indices of commitment, such as:

   - certainty of one's plans regarding continuing in ROTC
   - eagerness with which one's period of obligated Army service is viewed
   - length of intended Army service
   - attachment to ROTC/Army

A Model of ROTC/Army Career Commitment

In order to provide the research team with a framework for studying the ROTC/Army career commitment process, a model of the process was developed from a survey of the literature and from in-depth interviews with 135 ROTC cadets and Army officers. The model is graphically portrayed in Figure 1.

There are two components to the model in Figure 1:

1. the *series of decisions* one makes in joining and remaining in the ROTC/Army career path. These decisions are represented as *diamonds* in the figure;

2. the *set of interacting environmental-social-personal forces and conditions* which influence the decisions a person makes about the career path. These predisposing forces and conditions are represented as *boxes* in the figure.

The remainder of this section will summarize the ROTC/Army career commitment process, as portrayed in Figure 1.

The first important condition influencing career commitment is the *context* in which the entire decision process occurs. These environmental determinants of commitment include the U.S. and world political and socioeconomic climate (see Box A, Figure 1), as well as the school, ROTC program, and Army branch environments (Boxes B1 and B2).

The next set of influences on career commitment lie within the individual; they are the *background and socio-psychological traits* which make the ROTC/Army career path attractive to certain groups of individuals. Included in this second set of influences are the individual's demographic profile (Box 1), aptitudes (Box 2), socialization conditions (Box 3), and values, interests, aspirations, and attitudes (Boxes 4 and 5).

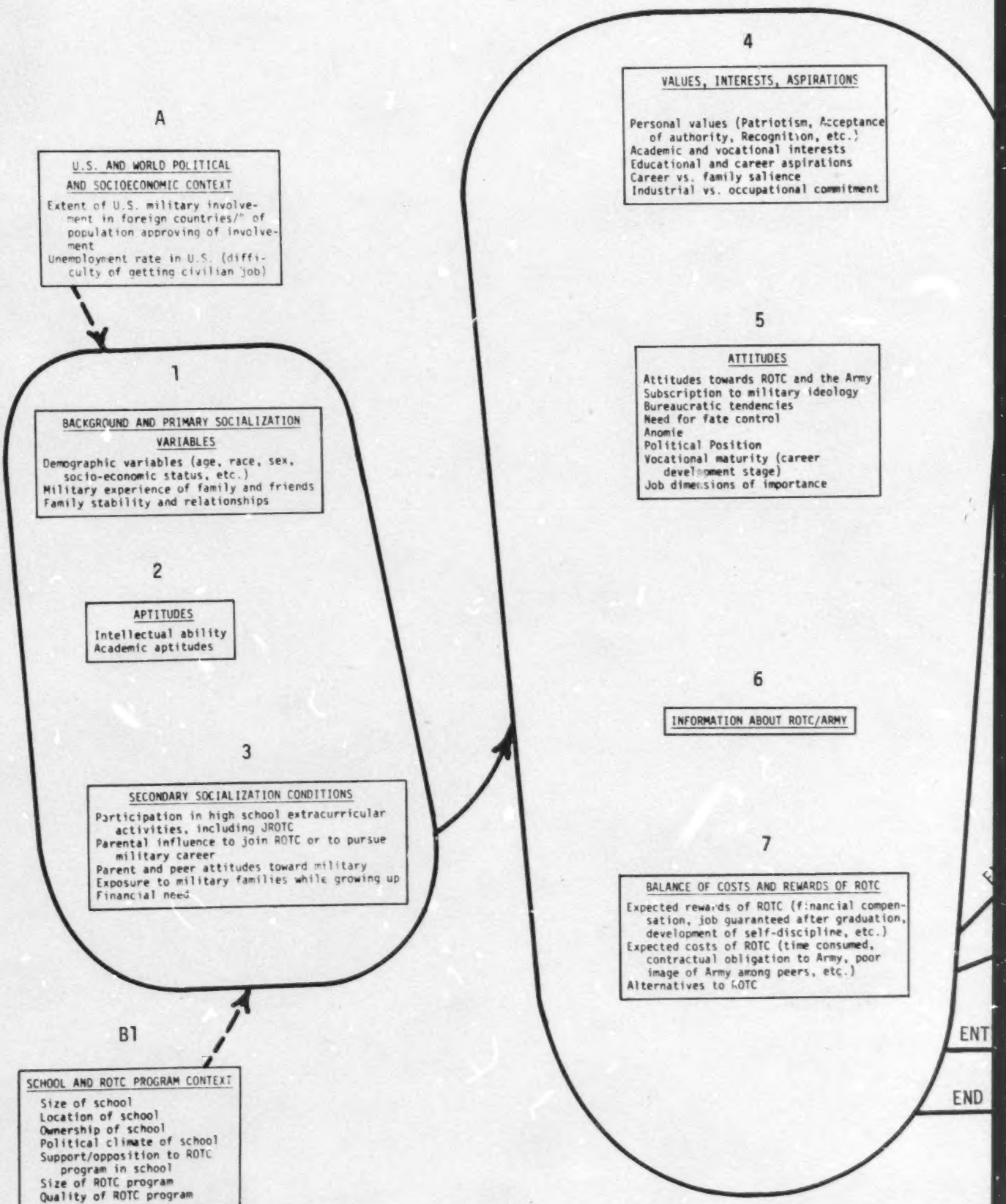
The third influence leading to the initial commitment decision (the decision to participate in ROTC) has to do with *acquisition of information about the ROTC/Army career path* (Box 6). Such information will either be sought out by the interested individual, or acquired directly from his/her environment, e.g., by the presence of a military father in the home, or by recruitment solicitations on the school campus.

This information is then assumed to lead to the fourth crucial influence on commitment, namely, an individual's *expectations about the rewards and costs* of ROTC/Army (Box 7), in light of the *alternatives* available, and the individual's previously discussed *aspirations* and *values*. Is there more to be gained than lost by joining ROTC? What are the alternatives available that may satisfy the major rewards ROTC has to offer (e.g., other sources of financial support, as an alternative to obtaining the goal of having enough money to go to college; enrolling at West Point, as an alternative to obtaining the goal of receiving training for an Army officer career).

On the basis of this weighing of rewards versus costs, the individual decides whether or not to join ROTC.

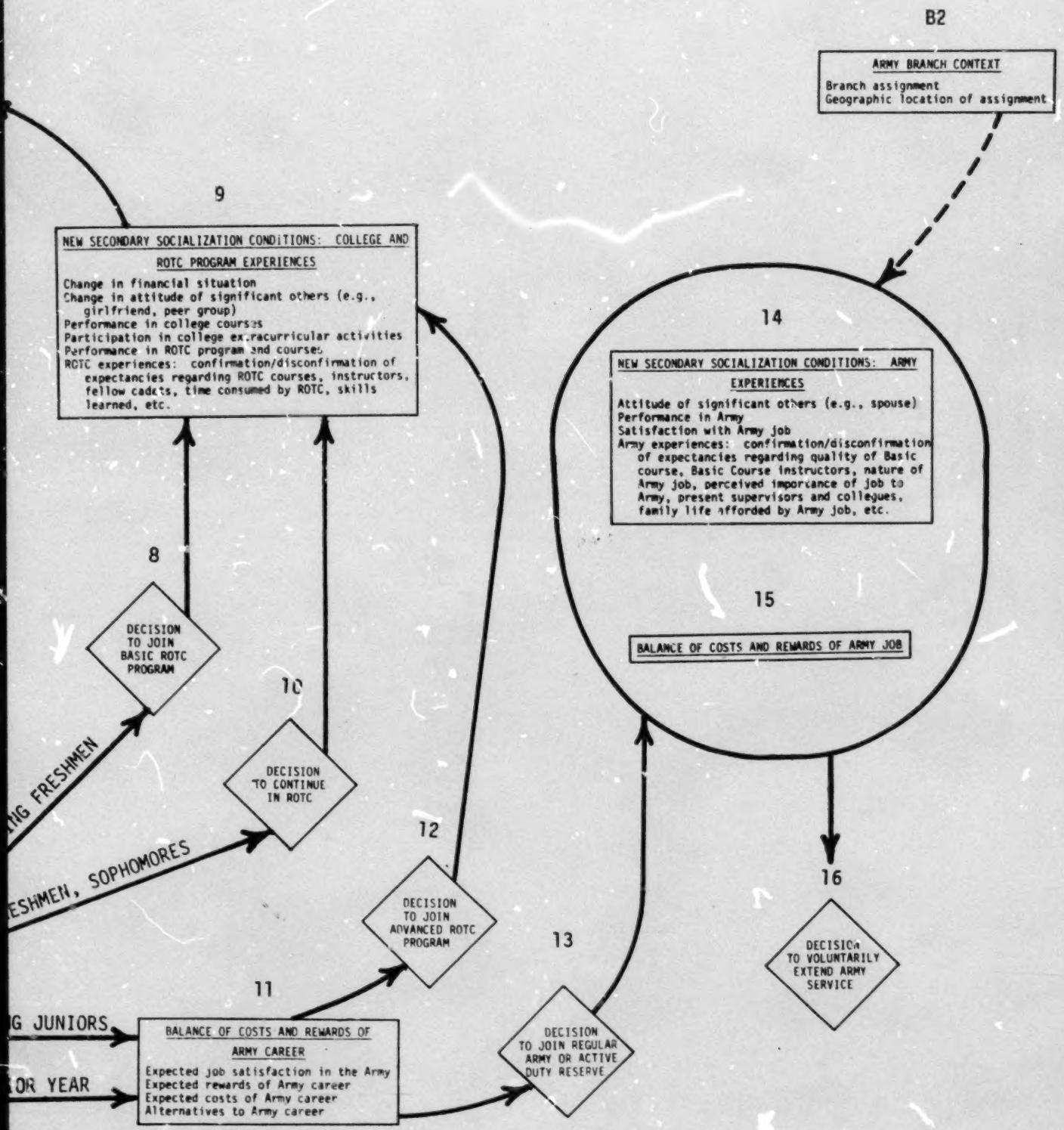
The *decision to participate in ROTC*, then, (Diamond 8) is based on all these prior influences in the sequence: the societal and group context; an assessment of whether one's aptitudes, values, interests, aspirations and attitudes are compatible with military life; information about ROTC and the Army; and an assessment of whether the rewards of ROTC outweigh its costs, in light of the alternatives available. It must be pointed out that these influences are not always explicitly and rationally evaluated by an individual participant, even though strong relationships between them and commitment will be documented.

The crucial determinants of commitment once an individual has decided to join ROTC shift to one's *experiences* (Box 9) in the program, chiefly whether one *performs* well in it, and whether one's *prior expectations regarding its rewards are confirmed*. The crucial expectations will, of course, vary from one cadet to another. They could include: competent instructors, friendly cadets,


A
U.S. AND WORLD POLITICAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC CONTEXT
Extent of U.S. military involvement in foreign countries/% of population approving of involvement
Unemployment rate in U.S. (difficulty of getting civilian job)
1
BACKGROUND AND PRIMARY SOCIALIZATION VARIABLES
Demographic variables (age, race, sex, socio-economic status, etc.)
Military experience of family and friends
Family stability and relationships
2
APTITUDES
Intellectual ability
Academic aptitudes
3
SECONDARY SOCIALIZATION CONDITIONS
Participation in high school extracurricular activities, including JROTC
Parental influence to join ROTC or to pursue military career
Parent and peer attitudes toward military
Exposure to military families while growing up
Financial need
B1
SCHOOL AND ROTC PROGRAM CONTEXT
Size of school
Location of school
Ownership of school
Political climate of school
Support/opposition to ROTC program in school
Size of ROTC program
Quality of ROTC program
4
VALUES, INTERESTS, ASPIRATIONS
Personal values (Patriotism, Acceptance of authority, Recognition, etc.)
Academic and vocational interests
Educational and career aspirations
Career vs. family salience
Industrial vs. occupational commitment
5
ATTITUDES
Attitudes towards ROTC and the Army
Subscription to military ideology
Bureaucratic tendencies
Need for fate control
Anomie
Political Position
Vocational maturity (career development stage)
Job dimensions of importance
6
INFORMATION ABOUT ROTC/ARMY
7
BALANCE OF COSTS AND REWARDS OF ROTC
Expected rewards of ROTC (financial compensation, job guaranteed after graduation, development of self-discipline, etc.)
Expected costs of ROTC (time consumed, contractual obligation to Army, poor image of Army among peers, etc.)
Alternatives to ROTC
ENT
END

FIG

A FRAMEWORK FOR VIEWING THE


B2
ARMY BRANCH CONTEXT
Branch assignment
Geographic location of assignment
9
NEW SECONDARY SOCIALIZATION CONDITIONS: COLLEGE AND ROTC PROGRAM EXPERIENCES
Change in financial situation
Change in attitude of significant others (e.g., girlfriend, peer group)
Performance in college courses
Participation in college extracurricular activities
Performance in ROTC program and courses
ROTC experiences: confirmation/disconfirmation of expectancies regarding ROTC courses, instructors, fellow cadets, time consumed by ROTC, skills learned, etc.
14
NEW SECONDARY SOCIALIZATION CONDITIONS: ARMY EXPERIENCES
Attitude of significant others (e.g., spouse)
Performance in Army
Satisfaction with Army job
Army experiences: confirmation/disconfirmation of expectancies regarding quality of Basic course, Basic Course instructors, nature of Army job, perceived importance of job to Army, present supervisors and collegues, family life afforded by Army job, etc.
15
BALANCE OF COSTS AND REWARDS OF ARMY JOB
8
DECISION TO JOIN BASIC ROTC PROGRAM
10
DECISION TO CONTINUE IN ROTC
12
DECISION TO JOIN ADVANCED ROTC PROGRAM
13
DECISION TO JOIN REGULAR ARMY OR ACTIVE DUTY RESERVE
16
DECISION TO VOLUNTARILY EXTEND ARMY SERVICE
11
BALANCE OF COSTS AND REWARDS OF ARMY CAREER
Expected job satisfaction in the Army
Expected rewards of Army career
Expected costs of Army career
Alternatives to Army career
NG FRESHMEN
ESHMEN, SOPHOMORES
G JUNIORS
OR YEAR

ARMY CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS

——individual factors influencing commitment
-----environmental factors influencing commitment

opportunities for leadership training, financial support, interesting courses with useful applications, development of self-awareness and self-discipline, good preparation for a career in the Army or civilian life, and a chance to have some fun. One important rule at this stage of the process is: disconfirmation of expectancies important to the individual will have a stronger (negative) effect on commitment than disconfirmation of expectancies not important to the individual.

Figure 1 goes on to imply that the crucial experiental variables of performance and confirmation/disconfirmation of expectancies feed back into and often change the ROTC cadet's values, interests, aspirations, and attitudes. The experiences also equip him/her with additional, more accurate information about ROTC. A reassessment of the rewards and costs of ROTC is then undertaken, based on expectations for the future in light of the previous experience.

This cycle of Experiences⟶Change in values, interests, attitudes⟶ Additional information about ROTC⟶Reassessment of the costs and rewards of ROTC is repeated throughout the ROTC years. There are three points at which crucial ROTC-related decisions are made: (a) acceptance of an ROTC scholarship, which can occur anytime during the four years in college; (b) joining the Advanced ROTC program at the start of the Junior year in college; and (c) applying for and receiving a Regular Army Commission at the end of the Senior year. These decisions obligate the cadet to a 4-, 2-, and 3-year Army service, respectively.

Thus, prior to making these decisions, a set of expectations over and above those concerning ROTC have to be weighed by an individual. These are related to the *rewards and costs of the period of obligated Army service* (Box 11) incurred by the decision. Included in these considerations is expected job satisfaction in the Army: Will the Army offer me the things I consider important in a job (e.g., salary, advancement opportunities, responsibility, freedom, security, contribution to society)? What are the alternatives I am foregoing by giving 2, 3, or 4 years of my immediate post-college life to the Army?

Finally, once in the Army, crucial *experiences* (Box 14) again confirm or disconfirm the expectancies. The experiences include: performance in the Army, satisfaction with one's job, ability to secure desired assignments, fringe benefits, prestige, freedom of action, travel opportunities, relationships with supervisors, and opportunities for contribution to society. These experiences, plus possible new personal influences in one's life (e.g., a new spouse, starting a family) lead to a reassessment of the *balance of costs and rewards of Army life* (Box 15). On the basis of this assessment, the young officer then either voluntarily extends his/her Army stint or returns to civilian life when the period of obligated Army service is up.

The study investigated the extent to which each of the foregoing forces and conditions influence participation in and commitment to the ROTC/Army career path. As this report is read, one may wish to reflect upon the personal experiences and influences that he/she underwent in making personal decisions to join and remain in ROTC/Army.

The Study's Participants

Representative samples of (a) high school seniors, (b) college students in schools offering ROTC, and (c) ROTC-graduate Army officers serving their period of obligated Army service, participated in the study.

A total of 1,089 high school seniors made up the high school senior sample. They were chosen from 12 high schools distributed across the U.S. and representing urban, suburban, and rural communities. Seven of the schools had Junior ROTC (JROTC) programs; five did not. The distribution of the high school sample is given in Table 1.

The college sample was selected from 11 colleges drawn from the four ROTC regions, and representing small, medium and large public and private colleges and universities. A total of 1,633 college students participated, in the proportions indicated in Table 2.

Data collection from the college sample was facilitated by the able assistance of the Professors of Military Science at the 11 participating colleges. These PMS's contacted teachers, set up class time, and did numerous other logistic tasks to help the project staff. The success of the college data collection is in large part due to their assistance and cooperation.

The Army officer sample was selected from an Army personnel tape supplied to the project staff by the U.S. Army Research Institute. The personnel tape contained the names of 10,164 ROTC-graduate officers commissioned between July 1970 and July 1974. A one-tenth sample of these officers was selected to participate in the study. Thus, 1,017 questionnaires were mailed out. Of these, 200 were returned by the post office stamped "addressee moved; no forwarding address known," leaving 817 officers in the target sample. Of these, 646 returned complete, filled-out questionnaires, a response rate of 79.1%. The make-up of the final Army sample (a few questionnaires were eliminated because they arrived too late for inclusion in the data analysis) is reported in Table 3.

The foregoing groups of individuals completed specially constructed questionnaires which were designed to measure the various factors encompassed by the model presented in Figure 1. The questionnaire took 35-55 minutes to complete. A pilot test of each questionnaire was conducted prior to its use in the large-scale study to eliminate minor problems with item wording and questionnaire length.

The questionnaires were divided into seven sections:

I. Background Information Items
II. School Life Items
III. Job Plans and Aspirations
IV. ROTC and Military-Related Items
V. Personal Value Items
VI. Opinion Survey
VII. Career-Related Concerns (College and Army officer questionnaires) or College-Related Decisions (High School questionnaire)

The questionnaire items were all of the "objective" type in order to facilitate data processing. Construction of such objective items was made possible by an analysis of data from 135 interviews with ROTC cadets and Army officers conducted prior to development of the questionnaires. All responses to crucial interview questions (e.g., Why did you join ROTC? What do you like/dislike about ROTC/Army?) that were given by at least ten interview respondents were reflected in the questionnaire. Thus the range of ROTC and Army-related items and responses in the questionnaire rests on an empirical foundation.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SAMPLE

Type of Community	Presence of Junior ROTC (JROTC) Program in School		Total
	Schools With JROTC	Schools Without JROTC	
Urban	276	214	490
Suburban	239	247	486
Rural	32	81	113
Total	547[a]	542	1,089

[a]Of these, 102 were members of JROTC

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT SAMPLE

Year in School	ROTC	Non-ROTC	Total
Freshmen	202	321	523
Sophomores	173	163	336
Juniors	176	200	376
Seniors	196	174	370
Unknown	7	21	28
Total	754	879	1633

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARMY OFFICER SAMPLE

Period of Obligation	Regular Army		Active Duty Reserve		Total
	No Scholarship (3-year Commitment)	Scholarship (4-year Commitment)	No Scholarship (2-year Commitment)	Scholarship (4-year Commitment)	
Early (1st year)	20	25	75	45	165
Middle	47	57	111	59	274
Late (last 6 mos.)	35	49	73	31	188
Unknown					7
Total	102	131	259	135	634
% of Grand Total	16.3	20.9	41.3	21.5	100.0

Questions Addressed by the Study

The remainder of this publication reports how the study's findings can be used to answer the major questions addressed by the study.

CHAPTER 2

DETERMINANTS OF PARTICIPATION

- Who joins ROTC/Army? Why?
- Which ROTC cadets obtain Regular Army commissions?

CHAPTER 3

DETERMINANTS OF COMMITMENT

- Which members of ROTC/Army are highly committed to an Army career? Why?
- What factors in the individual and his/her school or ROTC program environment increase or decrease commitment to an Army career?

CHAPTER 4

THE CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS

- How do commitment and commitment-related attitudes change with increasing exposure to the ROTC/Army career path?
- How does commitment develop in an individual? And is the process of career commitment different for various population subgroups?

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

- What are the study's major findings?
- What are the implications of these major findings for ROTC/Army recruitment, selection, and retention?

CHAPTER 2

DETERMINANTS OF PARTICIPATION IN ROTC/ARMY

The main questions addressed in this chapter are: (a) Who joins ROTC in high school? Who joins ROTC in college? What demographic and socio-psychological differences, if any, exist between ROTC cadets and the general student population? (b) Of those graduates of the ROTC Advanced Course, who joins the Regular Army? What differences, if any, exist between ROTC graduates who become members of the Regular Army and ROTC graduates who join the Reserves? In short, this chapter addresses itself to the general issue of who participates in the ROTC/Army career path.

Definition of Career Path Participants

The term "career path participant" will be used in this chapter to include the 102 JROTC high school seniors, 754 ROTC college students, and 233 Regular Army officers who participated in the study. The 987 non-JROTC high school seniors, 879 non-ROTC college students, and 394 Active Duty Reserve officers who also participated in the study will be referred to as "non-participants."

Only a small portion of the non-ROTC sample intends to make a career of the Army (2.6% of non-JROTC high school seniors and 1.6% of non-ROTC college students). Hence, these groups are aptly characterized as "non-participants" in the ROTC/Army career path. The career intention difference is not as striking for the Active Duty Reserve versus Regular Army officers: 21% of Reservists intend to make a career of the Army versus 39.1% of Regular Army members. Thus, Reservists are not really "non-participants" the way members of the general student population are, and it is hypothesized that the differences in the demographic and socio-psychological profile of the two Army officer groups will not be as striking as the differences between the ROTC and non-ROTC students.

In addition, it is hypothesized that differences found between ROTC participants and the general student population will be more marked for the college than for the high school sample. This is so because the college participants are further along the career continuum, and have thus been exposed for a longer period of time to ROTC/Army career influences.

Both these hypotheses were borne out by the data, as this chapter will show: The study investigated a total of 204 demographic and socio-psychological characteristics on which participants and non-participants might differ. For high school seniors, 163 of these were appropriate and 66 (40.5%) successfully discriminated JROTC high school seniors from their classmates. As hypothesized, the discrimination rate for college ROTC versus non-ROTC members was much higher than this (145/198 or 73.2%); that for Regular Army versus Active Duty Reserve officers was much lower (44/201 or 21.9%).

The remainder of this chapter will elaborate on the differences obtained between the ROTC and non-ROTC student groups and between the Regular Army and Active Duty Reserve officer groups. The career commitment model described in the preceding chapter will be used to organize the discussion. Thus differences between the respondent groups on each factor encompassed by the model will be discussed in turn.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Their Demographic Profile

There were 16 demographic characteristics measured in the questionnaire: sex, race, marital status, socioeconomic status, year in school (college students only), region of socialization, type of community in which grew up, religion, age, number of brothers, number of sisters, number of older brothers, number of older sisters, number of children (married college students and Army officers only), father's birthplace (U.S. or not), and mother's birthplace.

Significant differences were found between JROTC and non-JROTC high school seniors on the following variables:

1. Sex. JROTC students were disproportionately male;[1]
2. Socioeconomic status. A greater proportion of JROTC students came from the upper socioeconomic brackets;
3. Religion. JROTC students were disproportionately Protestant or members of a religion other than Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism;
4. Age. JROTC students were older than non-JROTC students;
5. Number of sisters. JROTC students had a greater number of sisters than non-JROTC students.

Significant differences were also found between the JROTC and non-JROTC groups on race, region of socialization and type of community in which they grew up, with JROTC members being disproportionately Black, and coming disproportionately from small cities/towns in the south. However, these differences were undoubtedly caused, at least to some extent, by stratification of the sample on these variables (e.g., the high school pool included a military high school in the south with all respondents in JROTC), hence these findings may be attributable to sampling characteristics rather than to "real" differences between the JROTC and non-JROTC groups.

Of the applicable demographic variables, only two--sex[1] and religion--were significantly related to participation in college ROTC, with ROTC college cadets tending to be disproportionately male, and to list their religion as "other." Only two significant differences were found in the demographic profile of members of the Regular Army versus members of the Active Duty Reserve: A disproportionately larger percentage of Regular Army officers were White; a disproportionately larger percentage of Reservists were Black. Also, Regular Army members had more children than Reservists.

Two things are worth noting about these demographic-related findings: (a) This set of characteristics was the only one for which a greater number of significant differences between the ROTC and non-ROTC groups were found for the high school, as opposed to college, sample. (b) For the college and Army samples, this cluster had one of the *lowest* successful discrimination rates among the sets of characteristics in the model. As described in the previous paragraph, almost no demographic differences were found between ROTC college cadets and the general college student population and between members of the Regular Army and members of the Active Duty Reserve.

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[1]This finding is certainly related to the structure of the ROTC program; females were not admitted into college ROTC programs before 1972.

Subsequent sections of this chapter will show that *socio-psychological* differences (values, attitudes) between cadets and the general student population are much more pronounced in college than in high school, despite the greater demographic homogeneity of the college sample. This implies that career participation and commitment are determined much more heavily by a person's values and attitudes than by his/her demographic characteristics, especially at the college level. Consequently, it is important that recruitment and selection focus on these socio-psychological variables.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: The Military Experience and Attitudes of their Family and Friends

The next group of characteristics examined was the military background of respondents. This included the primary socialization variables of father's military experience and military experience of other family and friends, and the secondary socialization variables of contact with military families, and parents' and friends' military attitudes.

Several significant differences were found between the participant and non-participant groups. A greater percentage of participants (ROTC cadets; Regular Army officers) had fathers who had served in the Army. A greater percentage of participants had fathers who had a military career (over 15 years of military service). ROTC students also tended to (a) have more siblings and good friends in ROTC and the military, and to (b) have greater past and present contact with military families than non-ROTC students. These findings bring out the importance of primary and secondary socialization in career exploration.

Differences were also found in respondents' ratings of the military attitudes of their parents and friends, with ROTC cadets, especially the *college* cadets, attributing significantly more favorable attitudes to their parents and friends than non-ROTC students.

Finally, it was found that all respondent groups--non-ROTC and ROTC; high school, college, and Army--attributed more favorable military attitudes to their *parents*, as opposed to their friends. High school and college students, in particular, perceived their friends as having a predominantly negative opinion of the military. This finding is undoubtedly attributable to the disillusionment experienced by many young people in the era of the Vietnam war. Whether the anti-military attitudes prevailing at the time of this study change in the post-war era remains to be documented by future research.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Family Stability

Family stability was measured by means of two component items: number of communities lived in while growing up, and separation/divorce between one's parents. College ROTC students appeared to have a less stable family life than non-ROTC students: They (the cadets) lived in a greater number of communities while growing up; also, a greater percentage of cadets had separated or divorced parents.

The former finding is related to the fact that a disproportionate number of ROTC students had fathers in the military. The correlation between number of communities lived in and coming from a military family ranged from .31 to .48 for the various respondent groups.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Aptitudes and Achievement

The discussion thus far has centered on the demographic and socialization background characteristics and their relationship to participation in ROTC/Army. The focus now shifts to the aptitude and achievement set of characteristics. There were eight items measuring aptitude and achievement: high school grade average, college grade average, and self-rated ability ratings in physical sciences, social sciences, mathematics, English, fine arts, and physical education. ROTC college students reported lower high school and lower college grades than non-ROTC college students. Active Duty Reserve officers reported lower college grades than Regular Army officers. The former finding may be of some concern to ROTC recruiters. The latter finding should be reassuring to the Army, but is not surprising in light of the fact that Regular Army commissions are awarded partially on the basis of good grades.

In the self-rated abilities area, both high school and college ROTC students reported lower abilities in English than non-ROTC students. However, college ROTC cadets reported higher abilities than non-ROTC students in the physical sciences, social sciences, and physical education.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: College Subject Major

Nine subject areas which college students select as majors were identified. No significant differences were found with respect to the various subject majors selected by ROTC and non-ROTC students or between Regular Army and Active Duty Reserve officers.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Participation in School Extracurricular Activities

The extent to which the various respondent groups participate(d) in school extracurricular activities was studied. It was found that (a) among college students, five times as many ROTC students had been in JROTC, compared with non-ROTC students; (b) a greater proportion of college ROTC cadets attended high schools with a JROTC program than did their non-ROTC counterparts; and (c) a greater number of college ROTC cadets were simultaneously members of a social fraternity and/or a service-oriented club than non-ROTC students.

Findings (a) and (b) above are probably the ones of greatest interest. They indicate that recruitment rates for college ROTC are enhanced by (or at least correlated with) the presence of a JROTC program in one's high school, and by membership in JROTC.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Personal Values

The study investigated 14 personal values: Support, Conformity, Recognition, Independence, Benevolence, Leadership, Patriotism, Aestheticism, Religiousness, Need for Uniqueness, Equalitarianism, Acceptance of Authority, Intellectualism, and Pragmaticism. Respondents were asked to choose from among these 14 the three values *most* important to them and the three values *least* important to them. Marked differences were found in the value profile of the college ROTC and non-ROTC groups. In addition, some differences were found between the value profile of Regular Army and Active Duty Reserve officers, with the direction of the difference in general corresponding to the ROTC-non-ROTC difference.

The differences between participants' and non-participants' ratings of the various personal values are reported in Figure 2. Difference scores reported in the figure were computed as follows:

Difference between Group 1 (non-ROTC; Reserve) and Group 2 (ROTC; Regular Army)

= (% important, Group 2 + % unimportant, Group 1) minus
(% unimportant, Group 2 + % important, Group 1)

Thus, positive difference scores reflect values more important to ROTC and Regular Army members than to non-ROTC and Active Duty Reserve members. Negative difference scores reflect values more important to non-ROTC and Active Duty Reserve members than to ROTC and Regular Army members.

For both the college and high school groups, leadership, patriotism, conformity, acceptance of authority, and recognition were the values held *more* deeply by ROTC as opposed to non-ROTC students. Aestheticism, benevolence, religiousness, independence, support, and equalitarianism were the values held *less* deeply by ROTC as opposed to non-ROTC students. Differences between Regular Army members and members of the Active Duty Reserve followed this difference pattern exactly, except for the conformity value, which was more important to the Reservists than to the Regular Army members.

The quantity and consistency of value differences between the high school, college and Army officer respondent groups makes this group of characteristics one of the most potent in describing who joins or does not join the ROTC/Army career path.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Careers Being Considered

Respondents were presented with a list of 15 career groups "whose members share similar interests, abilities, training, and aptitudes." The career groups were:

1. Engineering, Physical Science, Mathematics, Architecture
2. Medical and Biological Sciences
3. Business Administration
4. General Teaching and Social Service
5. Humanities, Law, Social and Behavioral Sciences
6. Fine Arts, Performing Arts

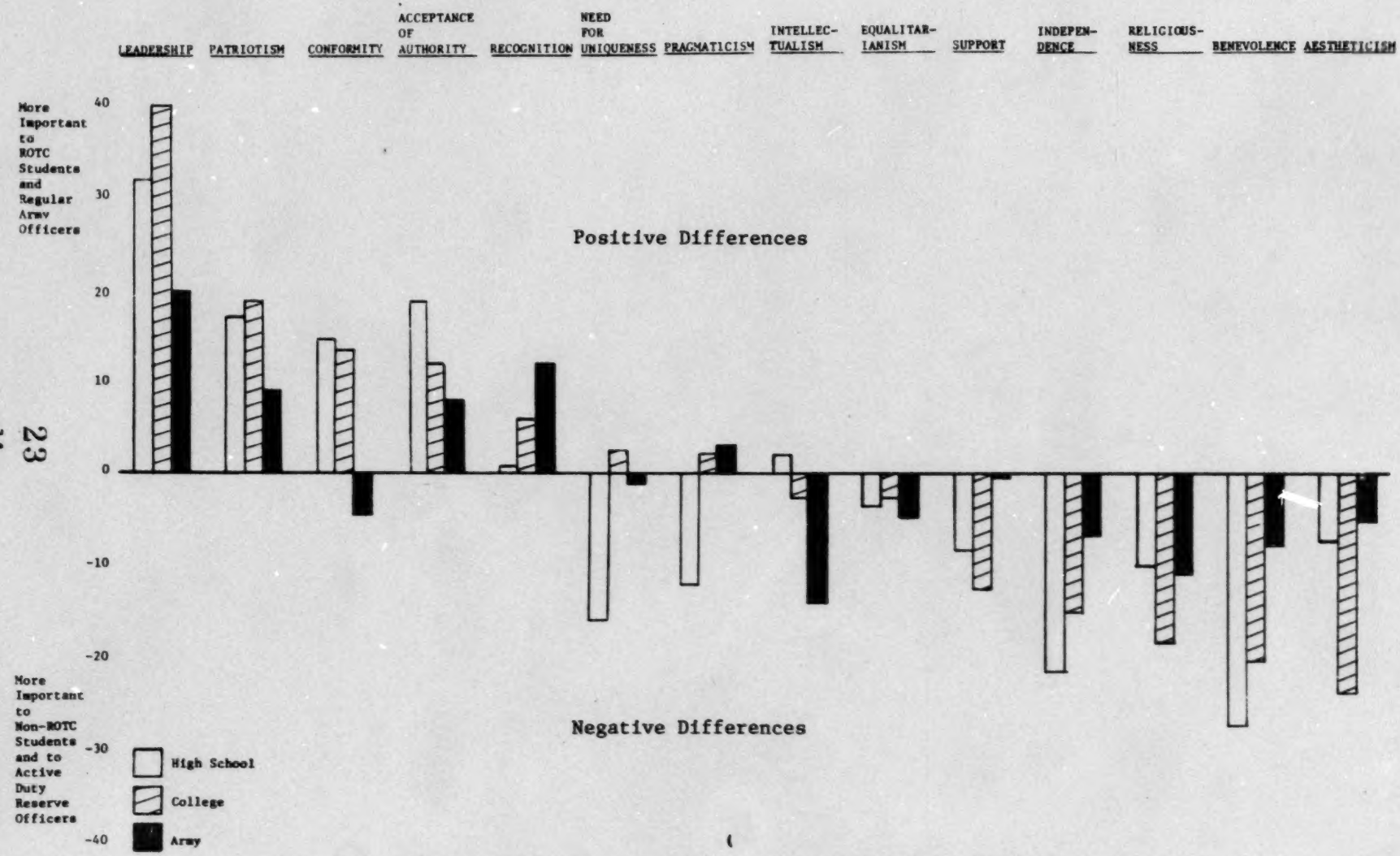

Figure 2. DIFFERENCES IN VALUE PROFILE OF PARTICIPANT VS. NON-PARTICIPANT RESPONDENT GROUPS

7. Technical Jobs
8. Proprietors, Sales
9. Mechanics, Industrial Trades
10. Construction Trades
11. Secretarial-Clerical, Office Workers
12. General Labor, Community and Public Service
13. Military Officer
14. Housewife
15. Other

Respondents were asked: "Which of the above 15 career clusters are you most likely to end up in?;" "Which . . . are you next most likely to end up in;" "Which . . . are you third most likely to end up in?"

Several inter-respondent group differences were found, the most important of which were the following:

1. Few non-ROTC college students are considering a military career: 1.6% of non-ROTC college students said that a military career was their first choice; 6.0% said it was one of their top three choices (corresponding figures for ROTC cadets were 30.0% and 70.2%, respectively).

2. As may be expected, a greater proportion of Regular Army as opposed to Active Duty Reserve officers is considering making the military a career.

3. Proportionately fewer ROTC cadets (as opposed to their non-ROTC peers) intend to go into the Teaching and Social Service career cluster. This finding supports the finding reported in the previous section that ROTC students place a proportionately lower value on benevolence than non-ROTC students.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Interests and Aspirations

Respondents were asked to rate their interests in six academic areas--Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, Mathematics, English, Fine Arts, and Physical Education. No differences in academic interests were found between the high school and Army officer participant groups. Differences in four of the six subject areas, however, were found between the college groups, with ROTC students reporting a higher interest than non-ROTC students in the Physical and Social Sciences and non-ROTC students reporting a higher interest in English and Fine Arts.

Data were also collected with respect to four other interest/aspiration items: a) highest educational level aspired for; b) salary expectations for 15 years out of high school; c) career salience, or importance to the person of job vs. family; and d) organizational salience, or importance to the person of the quality and reputation of the organization for which one works vs. the nature of work one is doing.

Two significant findings were obtained for the high school sample: a) Male JROTC members had higher educational aspirations than male non-JROTC members, and b) Male JROTC members exhibited greater organizational salience than did their non-JROTC peers.

For the Army officer sample, only one significant difference was found between Regular Army and Active Duty Reserve members, with the Reservists reporting higher eventual salary expectations than Regular Army members.

As is the case with most of the questions studied, the greatest differences between participants and non-participants were found for the college sample. ROTC members--a) had higher educational aspirations; b) expected a higher salary 15 years after high school; c) had higher job, as opposed to family, salience; and d) had higher organizational, as opposed to occupational, salience--than non-ROTC members. The higher salary expectations on the part of ROTC members was attributable completely to the ROTC female subsample; male ROTC members did *not* have higher salary expectations than their non-ROTC peers, in keeping with the previously mentioned finding that members of the Regular Army had lower salary expectations than their Reservist peers.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: What They Are Looking For in a Job

Respondents were presented with 21 job factors which had been uncovered by previous researchers as being some of the possible components of job satisfaction. They were asked to rate each dimension for personal importance on a 5-point scale, with a 1 standing for an "extremely important" rating and a 5 standing for a rating of "not important at all." College and Army officer respondents were, in addition, asked to rate the factors on a separate 5-point scale for potential or actual satisfaction in an Army officer job.

Only three differences were found between the high school JROTC and non-JROTC ratings, with the JROTC group placing higher importance on chance to be a leader and the non-JROTC students placing higher importance on salary and job security.

The differences obtained between members of the Regular Army and Active Duty Reservists were interesting because of the uniformity of their direction. There were eight job dimensions on which significantly different importance ratings were assigned by the two Army officer groups: utilization of skills, contribution to society, more schooling, stability of home life, personal freedom, chance to help others, interesting/challenging job, and advancement opportunity. Members of the Regular Army assigned *lower importance ratings* to *all* these dimensions than did members of the Active Duty Reserve. Interestingly, five of these eight dimensions--utilization of skills, contribution to society, stability of home life, personal freedom, and chance to help others--were ones on which an Army career was downrated in general by all respondent groups, as the next section will show.

Differences in importance ratings assigned by the college ROTC and non-ROTC groups reflected patterns different (at first glance) from those described above for the high school and Army officer samples. The non-ROTC group gave greater importance to interesting people and stability of home life. The ROTC group gave greater importance to salary, prestige, more schooling, chance to be a leader, adventure, job security, self-improvement, importance of work, and advancement opportunity. Five of these dimensions--chance to be a leader, advancement opportunity, self-improvement, adventure, and job security--were also top-rated by the ROTC group for expected satisfaction in the Army, as the next section will show.

Thus, perhaps a common thread runs through the differing Army officer and college ROTC patterns. Reservists (many of whom will soon be leaving the Army) stress the importance of dimensions the Army does *not* satisfy. ROTC cadets (many of whom will soon be entering the Army) stress the importance of dimensions they expect the Army to satisfy.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Expected and Actual Satisfaction with an Army Officer Job

The 21 job factors were also rated with respect to expected (college student group) and actual (Army officer group) satisfaction by an Army officer job. Ratings assigned by the ROTC and non-ROTC college students may be conceptualized as *expectations* regarding an Army officer career. Ratings assigned by Army officers, of course, reflect actual job *experiences*. To help the reader digest the satisfaction ratings assigned by the various respondent groups, the mean ratings are plotted in Figure 3. In the figure, the job factors are ordered according to decreasing expected satisfaction ratings assigned by ROTC students. The findings contained in Figure 3 can be summarized as follows:

1. An Army officer career is given a relatively high rating by all respondent groups. Only five of the 84 mean ratings are negative.

2. ROTC cadets foresee an Army career as providing more satisfaction than do non-ROTC students. ROTC students assigned higher satisfaction ratings to an Army career on each of the 21 dimensions studied; only one of these 21 differences (job security) failed to reach statistical significance.

3. Regular Army members are more satisfied with their Army jobs than are members of the Active Duty Reserve. The only dimension on which Reservists were significantly more satisfied than Regular Army members was quality of supervisors. Regular Army members were significantly more satisfied with the following dimensions: responsibility, chance to be a leader, job security, feedback on performance, and advancement opportunity. These findings are not surprising in light of the fact that members of the Regular Army are more in the mainstream of the Army "career" than are members of the Active Duty Reserve.

4. Striking differences between college student and Army officer ratings were found, and are most easily perceived by perusal of Figure 3. All 21 of the ROTC expected satisfaction ratings were higher than Army officer actual satisfaction ratings. On only five of the 21 dimensions--especially, chance to be a leader and responsibility--did Army officer actual satisfaction ratings exceed those of the non-ROTC students.

These differences in expectations versus experiences are consistent with previous cross-sectional as well as longitudinal studies in civilian as well as military contexts, but the magnitude of the differences obtained in the present study remains surprising. There are two possible explanations for these differences. If one is willing to assume the comparability of the college and Army officer groups, the only explanation would be disconfirmation by the Army experience of high expectations held while in college, a phenomenon which the career commitment model would postulate to lower commitment to the Army career.

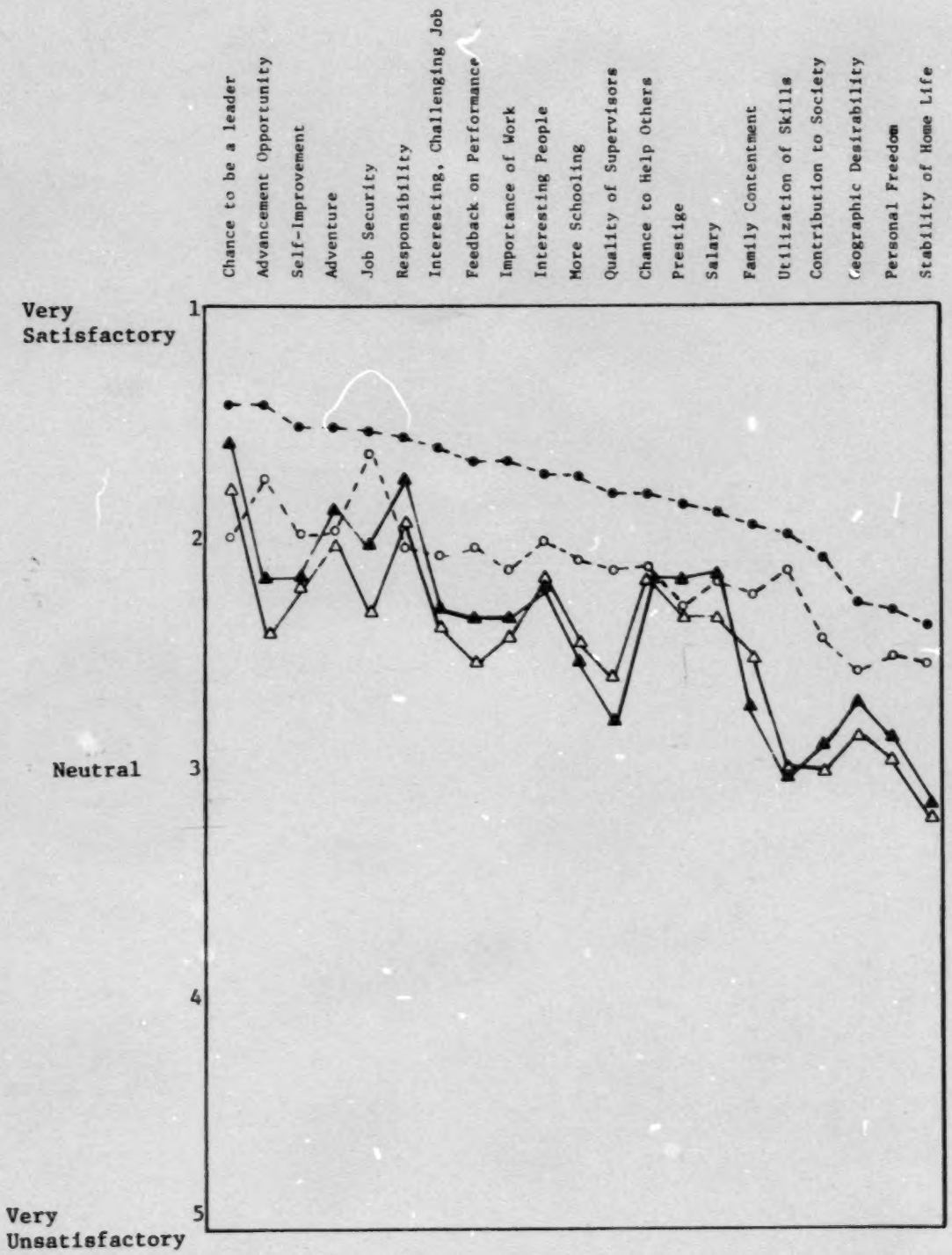

Figure 3. SATISFACTION RATINGS FOR AN ARMY OFFICER JOB

○ Expected satisfaction, non-ROTC College Students
● Expected satisfaction, ROTC College Students
▲ Actual satisfaction, Army officers (Regular Army)
△ Actual satisfaction, Army officers (Reserve)

- - - Expectations
—— Actual Experiences

However, because of the unique circumstances in which the present young officer group found themselves while in college (with the Vietnam War and the draft going on), it is possible that the present college and Army groups are *not* comparable, that the Army officer group had negative expectations about Army life while in college, and that little or no disconfirmation of expectations actually occurred upon assumption of the Army job.

The present cross-sectional study cannot provide information regarding which of the two explanations for the data is the right one. Of major concern to the Army should be: to what extent will the high expectations of present ROTC cadets be disconfirmed by their Army experience? Only a longitudinal study will be able to answer this question.

5. Ratings assigned by the two Army officer groups correspond more closely to each other than do ratings of the two college groups. This can be noted by a quick glance at Figure 3; also by the fact that only six of the 21 ratings assigned by the Army officer groups differed significantly from each other. On the other hand, 20 of the 21 ratings assigned by the college ROTC and non-ROTC groups differed significantly from each other.

6. The job dimensions best satisfied by an Army officer job were: chance to be a leader, adventure, and responsibility (according to both the college students and the Army officers), advancement opportunity, self-improvement, and job security (according to the college students). There was unanimous consensus among all respondent groups that the following job dimensions were *least* well satisfied by an Army officer job: stability of home life, personal freedom, geographic desirability, contribution to society, utilization of skills, and family contentment. In addition, Army officers gave their supervisors a low rating. The fact that all groups, including ROTC cadets and Army officers, downrated the degree to which an Army officer job contributes to society, is worthy of further investigation. Further research should likewise be undertaken to find out how the Army can better serve its members on the other unsatisfactory dimensions.

Participants vs. Non-Participants

Socio-Psychological Characteristics

The socio-psychological measures selected for this study measured the following characteristics: beliefs about ROTC, beliefs about the Army, subscription to military ideology, bureaucratic tendencies, need for fate control, anomy (or alienation), career development, and political position.

As with many of the other characteristics studied, the greatest differences were found between the college respondent groups, followed by the high school respondent groups, and lastly by the Army officer respondent groups.

It was found that:

1. High school JROTC members, college ROTC members, and Regular Army officers expressed *more favorable beliefs about ROTC* than did high school non-JROTC students, college non-ROTC students, and members of the Active Duty Reserve.

2. High school JROTC members, college ROTC members, and Regular Army officers expressed *more favorable beliefs about the Army* than did high school non-JROTC students, college non-ROTC students, and members of the Active Duty Reserve.

3. High school JROTC members, college ROTC members, and Regular Army officers expressed *greater subscription to military ideology* than did high school non-JROTC students, college non-ROTC students, and members of the Active Duty Reserve.

4. High school JROTC members and college ROTC members had *stronger bureaucratic tendencies* than high school non-JROTC students and college non-ROTC students.

5. College ROTC students scored *lower on the need for fate control scale* than did college non-ROTC students. This means that college ROTC students feel less of a need to control their personal future than do their classmates.

6. College ROTC students scored *lower on the anomy scale* than did college non-ROTC students. This means that college ROTC students are less alienated than their classmates, and feel more bound by social norms.

7. College ROTC students had *higher career development scores* than did college non-ROTC students. This means that college ROTC students are engaged in more active career planning and exploration than non-ROTC students. They are also more actively concerned about getting established in a career.

8. College ROTC students rated themselves as being *more conservative politically* than did college non-ROTC students.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Information about ROTC/Army

College respondents (only) were given a 14-item information test about ROTC and Army. This test was the only component of the questionnaire which had "right" and "wrong" answers. Not surprisingly, it was found that ROTC students had more accurate knowledge about ROTC and the Army than did non-ROTC students. The extent of misconceptions about ROTC/Army held by the non-ROTC general student population was, however, quite surprising. Over 30% of non-ROTC college students believe, incorrectly, that:

1. Graduating from ROTC means that you have to serve four years of active duty in the Army;

2. ROTC pays all cadets $100 per month during the freshman and sophomore years of college.

3. One may not join the last two years of ROTC without joining the first two;

4. ROTC requires attending a summer camp the first two years of college;

5. The starting base pay for an Army officer is over $700 per month;

6. All officers must serve at least four years active duty;

7. Officers can retire after 15 years duty at one-half of their pay;

8. Post graduate schooling for officers is completely financed by the Army;

9. After an obligated duty period, officers may resign from the Army at any time;

10. Officers receive three weeks paid vacation per year.

Mistaken beliefs 1, 4, and 6 in the preceding list reflect misperceptions that exaggerate the extent of *obligations* cadets take on when they join ROTC. Mistaken beliefs 2, 5, 7, 8, and 10 reflect misperceptions that exaggerate the salary and *fringe benefits* accompanying membership in ROTC/Army. These findings have implications for recruitment advertising. They suggest that there is no need to stress the fringe benefit package accompanying ROTC/Army, as students are well aware of these benefits (indeed think they are more extensive than they actually are). Rather, one aspect of advertising to stress, or at least point out, is the limited nature of obligations contracted by joining ROTC, e.g., the flexibility of the program, and the options at various stages to enter/leave.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Beliefs about ROTC

The 26 items measuring beliefs about ROTC and the 28 items measuring beliefs about the Army were studied individually, in order to provide insight into the network of specific beliefs held by the various respondent groups. Each of the beliefs was shown by initial interviews with cadets and officers to be an important influence on their decisions to join, remain in, or drop out of ROTC/Army.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each belief. The mean favorability scores on the 26 beliefs about ROTC given by the college and Army officer groups are plotted in order from favorable to unfavorable in Figure 4. Those beliefs on the left of the graph are those aspects of ROTC with which cadets are well satisfied. Those on the right side of the graph are those with which cadets are somewhat dissatisfied. ROTC programs would do well to focus attention on how the latter set of dimensions can be improved.

Examination of Figure 4 reveals the following major findings:

1. The Army officer groups' beliefs about ROTC were much more in correspondence with each other than were the college groups' beliefs, in keeping with previously discussed findings on the smaller differences between the officer, as opposed to student, groups. In addition, the close correspondence between the Regular Army and Reserve officer retrospective ratings of ROTC lends credence to these ratings, by documenting that retrospective evaluations are not distorted by one's present status in the system.

2. Beliefs about ROTC held by ROTC cadets were consistently more favorable than either beliefs held by their non-ROTC peers or by Army officers retrospectively evaluating ROTC. The discrepancy between the present cadet and officer (past cadet) evaluations of ROTC is important. Either: a) ROTC programs have improved in quality; or b) present officers were in ROTC at a "bad time" for ROTC,

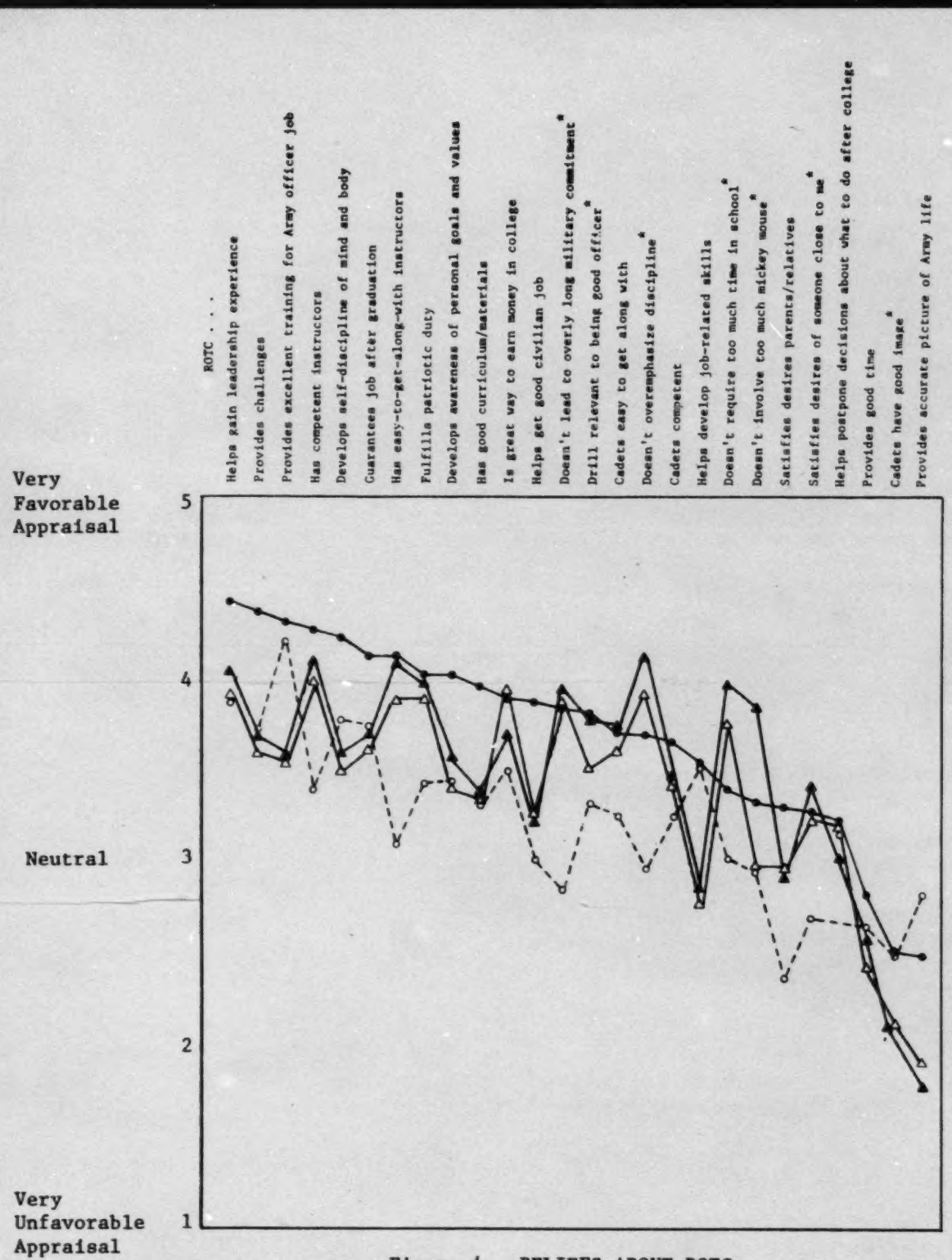
ROTC . . .
Helps gain leadership experience
Provides challenges
Provides excellent training for Army officer job
Has competent instructors
Develops self-discipline of mind and body
Guarantees job after graduation
Has easy-to-get-along-with instructors
Fulfills patriotic duty
Develops awareness of personal goals and values
Has good curriculum/materials
Is great way to earn money in college
Helps get good civilian job
Doesn't lead to overly long military commitment*
Drill relevant to being good officer*
Cadets easy to get along with
Doesn't overemphasize discipline*
Cadets competent
Helps develop job-related skills
Doesn't require too much time in school*
Doesn't involve too much mickey mouse*
Satisfies desires parents/relatives
Satisfies desires of someone close to me*
Helps postpone decisions about what to do after college
Provides good time
Cadets have good image*
Provides accurate picture of Army life
Very Favorable Appraisal
5
4
Neutral
3
2
Very Unfavorable Appraisal
1

Figure 4. BELIEFS ABOUT ROTC

○ Beliefs held by non-ROTC College students
● Actual experiences of College ROTC cadets
▲ Retrospective appraisal by Army officers (Regular Army)
△ Retrospective appraisal by Army officers (Reserve)

– – – Expectations
——— Actual (present or past) experiences

*This item was worded in the opposite direction in the survey instrument.

NOTE -- All items have been coded such that
5 = Very Favorable Appraisal
1 = Very Unfavorable Appraisal.

with the draft, the Vietnam War, and anti-ROTC campus demonstrations lowering their respect for their ROTC programs; or c) the quality and utility of ROTC programs goes down in one's eyes once one joins the Army and finds out that ROTC does not provide an accurate picture of Army life. The present cross-sectional data cannot tell us which of these three explanations for the data is the right one. Of course, the explanations are not mutually exclusive; all of them may be partially correct.

3. The only dimensions more favorably endorsed by Army officers than by ROTC cadets were: ROTC does not lead to an overly long military commitment; ROTC does not overemphasize discipline; ROTC does not require too much time while in school.

4. The dimensions on which cadets rated ROTC most favorably were: ROTC helps gain leadership experience; ROTC provides challenges; ROTC provides excellent training for an Army officer job; ROTC has competent instructors; and ROTC develops self-discipline of mind and body. Army officers tended to agree with the first and fourth assessments (regarding leadership experience and competent instructors) but disagreed with the other three.

5. The dimensions on which cadets as well as Army officers rated ROTC least favorably were: ROTC provides a good time; cadets have a good image; and ROTC provides an accurate picture of Army life. It appears that some effort will have to be spent determining the exact composition of this "poor image" so that it can be combatted with recruitment advertising. It is possible that part of the poor image may disappear in the post-Vietnam years. As far as restructuring ROTC to provide a more accurate picture of Army life is concerned, more research should be carried out to establish exactly what expectations about the Army held while in ROTC are disconfirmed by the Army experience. (The present study provides some leads in this matter, as the next section will show.) ROTC programs could then be restructured to dispel misleading expectations.

Before proceeding to a discussion of beliefs about the Army held by the various respondent groups, mention must be made of the fact that subgroup differences--by race, socioeconomic status (SES) and sex subgroups--in perceptions of ROTC were analyzed. It was found that, in general:

1. Blacks had more favorable perceptions of ROTC than Whites.

2. Low SES respondents had more favorable perceptions of ROTC than high SES respondents, but this finding was not as strong as that for racial differences.

3. No differences existed between males and females in their perceptions of ROTC.

Participants vs. Non-Participants: Beliefs about the Army

Respondents were asked to rate 28 beliefs about the Army in a manner comparable to that just described for beliefs about ROTC. Figure 5 presents the ratings from the college and Army officer groups. In the figure the dimensions are ordered according to decreasing favorability of evaluation by ROTC cadets.

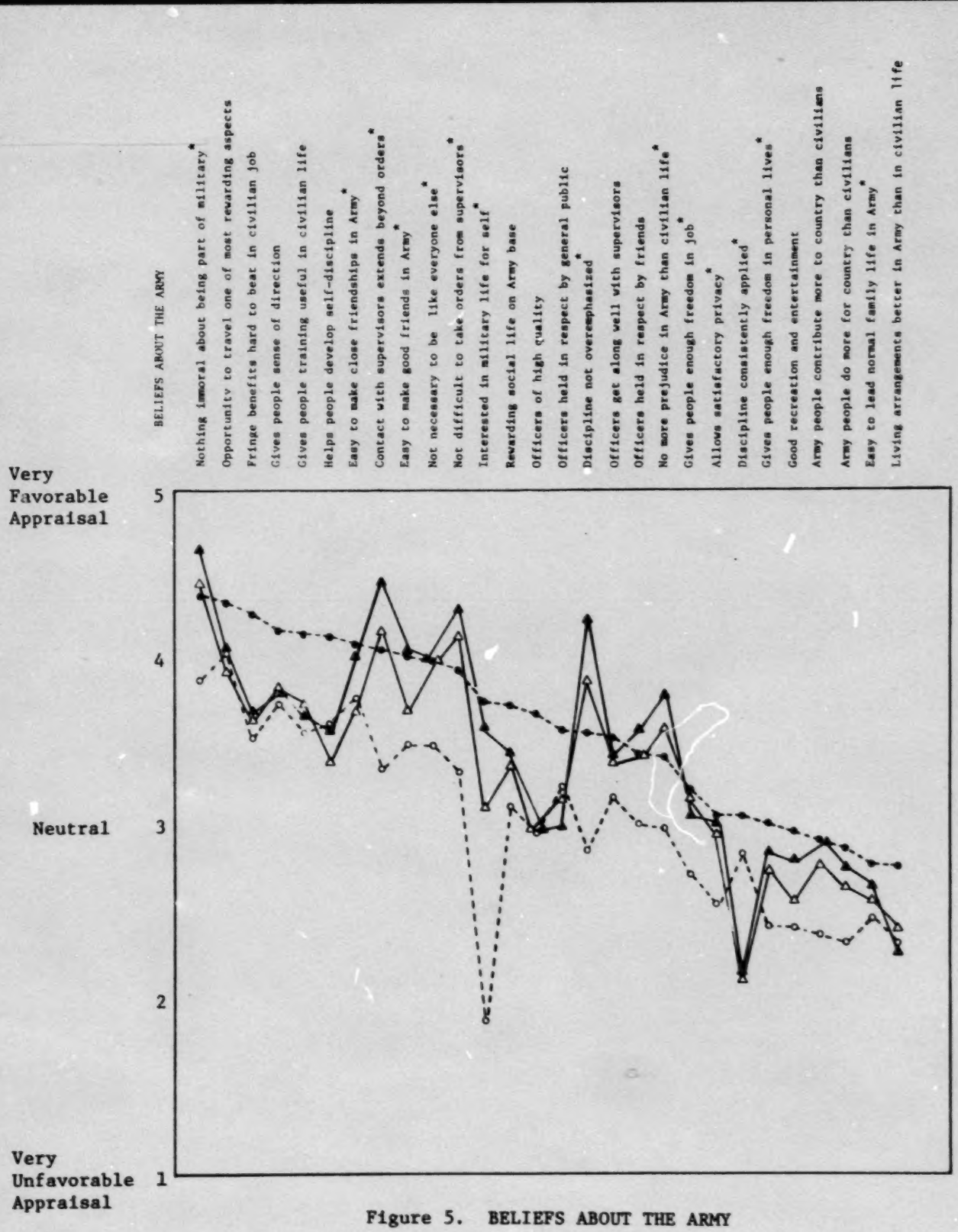
BELIEFS ABOUT THE ARMY
Nothing immoral about being part of military*
Opportunity to travel one of most rewarding aspects
Fringe benefits hard to beat in civilian job
Gives people sense of direction
Gives people training useful in civilian life
Helps people develop self-discipline
Easy to make close friendships in Army*
Contact with supervisors extends beyond orders*
Easy to make good friends in Army*
Not necessary to be like everyone else*
Not difficult to take orders from supervisors*
Interested in military life for self*
Rewarding social life on Army base
Officers of high quality
Officers held in respect by general public
Discipline not overemphasized*
Officers get along well with supervisors
Officers held in respect by friends
No more prejudice in Army than civilian life*
Gives people enough freedom in job*
Allows satisfactory privacy*
Discipline consistently applied*
Gives people enough freedom in personal lives*
Good recreation and entertainment
Army people contribute more to country than civilians
Army people do more for country than civilians
Easy to lead normal family life in Army*
Living arrangements better in Army than in civilian life
Very Favorable Appraisal
5
4
Neutral
3
2
Very Unfavorable Appraisal
1

Figure 5. BELIEFS ABOUT THE ARMY

○ Beliefs held by non-ROTC COllege Students
● Beliefs held by College ROTC Cadets
▲ Actual experiences of Army officers (Regular Army)
△ Actual experiences of Army officers (Reserve)

- - - Expectations
—— Actual experiences

*This item was worded in the opposite direction in the survey instrument.

NOTE — All items have been coded such that
5 = Very Favorable Appraisal;
1 = Very Unfavorable Appraisal.

There is one important difference in interpretation of data on beliefs about ROTC and data on beliefs about the Army. As mentioned in the preceding section, beliefs about ROTC held by non-ROTC students can be conceptualized as *expectations*, beliefs held by ROTC students as *current experiences*, beliefs held by Army officers as *retrospective evaluations* of experiences.

For beliefs about the Army, beliefs held by *both* ROTC and non-ROTC students are *expectations*, and beliefs held by Army officers reflect *current experiences*.

Examination of data in Figure 5 reveals the following findings:

1. As with the beliefs about ROTC data, the Army officer groups' beliefs about the Army were much more in correspondence with each other than were the college groups' beliefs. Of the 28 beliefs in the questionnaire, 28 (every single one) significantly distinguished ROTC college students from their peers, but only seven significantly distinguished Regular Army officers from officers in the Active Duty Reserve. Without exception, the (significantly) more favorable ratings were given by the ROTC and Regular Army groups.

2. Again as with the beliefs about ROTC data, beliefs about the Army held by ROTC cadets were generally more favorable than either beliefs held by their non-ROTC peers or by Army officers. There were five exceptions to this finding, five items on which Army officers rated the Army more favorably than did ROTC cadets. These beliefs, endorsed more strongly by officers than by cadets, were: there is nothing immoral about being part of the military; contact with supervisors extends to more than taking orders; it is not difficult to take orders from supervisors; discipline is not overemphasized in the Army; and there is less prejudice in the Army than in civilian life. The hypothesis may be raised that experience in the Army dispels prior concerns about these dimensions of Army life. A longitudinal study would be required to test this hypothesis.

3. On the other hand the following dimensions were rated much *less* favorably by officers than by cadets: consistent discipline; freedom in personal life; development of self-discipline; contribution to country; fringe benefits of the job. The hypothesis may be raised that experience in the Army disconfirms prior positive expectations about these dimensions of Army life. Again, a longitudinal study could test this hypothesis.

4. It is interesting to note that while officers generally believe that discipline is not overemphasized in the Army, they simultaneously believe (contrary to ROTC cadets' expectations) that discipline is *inconsistently* applied in the Army.

5. The most favorable beliefs about the Army held by ROTC cadets were: there is nothing immoral about being part of the military; the opportunity to travel is one of the Army's most rewarding aspects; the Army's fringe benefits are hard to beat in a civilian job; the Army gives people a sense of direction; the Army gives people training useful in civilian life; and the Army helps people develop self-discipline.

6. There was unanimous consensus among all respondent groups that the quality of living arrangements in the Army and the difficulty of leading a normal family life in the Army were its least satisfactory dimensions. Also, respondents did not believe that Army people contribute more to the country than do civilians. These findings complement those reported under the satisfaction with job dimensions section in which geographic desirability, stability of home life, and contribution to society were three of the five job dimensions on which an Army career received the lowest ratings.

Analysis of beliefs about the Army by race, SES, and sex subgroups showed that, as was the case with beliefs about ROTC, Blacks and low SES groups had more favorable perceptions of the Army whan Whites or high SES groups. However, these differences were not as pronounced as the differences obtained for the ROTC belief items. No differences in male versus female perceptions of the Army were found.

Discriminant Function Analyses of Characteristics Distinguishing Participants from Non-Participants

A discriminant function analysis was performed to select from among the previously identified characteristics those which best differentiated participants from non-participants. Table 4 lists in order of importance the best predictors of participation in JROTC, Basic ROTC, and Advanced ROTC.

Using the variables in Column 1 of Table 4, the discriminant function analysis correctly classified 78.7% of the high school senior sample as being either in the JROTC or non-JROTC group. Using the variables in Column 2 of Table 4, the discriminant function analysis correctly classified 79.6% of the college lowerclassman sample as being either in Basic ROTC or a non-ROTC freshman or sophomore. Using the variables in Column 3 of Table 4, the discriminant function analysis correctly classified 85.4% of the college upperclassman sample as being either in Advanced ROTC or a non-ROTC junior or senior.

These results confirm the general finding that kept emerging through the previously discussed analyses, that *differences between the ROTC and non-ROTC groups become larger as the ROTC group progresses further along the ROTC/Army career path.* Because these differences become larger, it becomes easier and easier to discriminate ROTC members from their classmates, on the basis of group members' socio-psychological profile. The cause of this general finding is not determinable from the available cross-sectional data. Is it the case that ROTC and the Army mold and change their members' socio-psychological profile? Or is it the case that only people with a particular profile join ROTC? Or is it the case that all kinds of people join ROTC but "deviants" (from the military mold) drop out? The study is not able to choose among these alternative causal explanations. In all probability, the true career evolution process encompasses *all* these mechanisms.

Summary

- Greater differences exist between the student ROTC vs. non-ROTC groups than between the officer Regular Army vs. Active Duty Reserve groups. This is not surprising in light of the fact that the student non-ROTC group is a true "non-participant" group, whereas both Army groups are, in a sense, made up of "participants."

TABLE 4

CHARACTERISTICS DISCRIMINATING ROTC PARTICIPANTS FROM NON-PARTICIPANTS, LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

Characteristics Associated with High School Membership in JROTC	Characteristics Associated with Membership in Basic ROTC	Characteristics Associated with Membership in Advanced ROTC
Socioeconomic Status	Score on Attitudes Towards ROTC Scale	Score on Attitudes Towards the Army Scale
Score on Attitudes Towards ROTC Scale	Score on Attitudes Towards the Army Scale	Parents' Rating of Army Officer Career
Social Contacts with Military People	Leadership: Army Satisfaction Rating	Social Contacts with Military People
Importance of Salary	Salary Expected in the Future	Score on Military Ideology Scale
English Abilities	Importance of Feedback	Social Science Abilities
Father's Military Experience	Feedback: Army Satisfaction Rating	Grade Point Average in College
Extracurricular Activities in High School	Social Contacts with Military People	Highest Degree Hoped for
Score on Military Ideology Scale	English Abilities	Importance of Working with Interesting People
Importance of Leadership	Military Families in Neighborhood Growing Up	Physical Science Interests
Friends in ROTC	Importance of More Schooling	Job Security: Army Satisfaction Rating
Friends' Rating of Army Officer Carreer	Friends' View of the Military	Leadership: Army Satisfaction Rating
Religious Upbringing	Contributing to Society: Army Satisfaction Rating	Stable Home Life: Army Satisfaction Rating
Age	Importance of Stable Home Life	JROTC Program in High School
Siblings in ROTC	Importance of Helping Others	Friends' View of the Military
Most Importance Personal Value	Religious Upbringing	English Interests
Score on Attitudes Towards the Army Scale	Personal Freedom: Army Satisfaction Rating	Most Important Personal Value
	Job Security: Army Satisfaction Rating	Number of Different Communities Lived In

• ROTC cadets differ from their classmates in their demographic background, their aptitudes, their social environment, and especially their socio-psychological profile (values, interests, aspirations, attitudes). With respect to demographic differences, a greater proportion of cadets come from military families that moved around a lot while the student was growing up. With respect to aptitude differences, ROTC cadets report lower academic grades than their classmates, but higher physical education abilities. With respect to social environment, ROTC cadets perceive their friends and especially their parents as having more favorable attitudes towards the military than their classmates do. With respect to socio-psychological differences, cadets place relatively higher value on patriotism, leadership, conformity, acceptance of authority, and recognition than their classmates and relatively lower value on aestheticism, independence, religiousness, benevolence, and equalitarianism. Cadets make relatively better organizational men than their classmates: they have higher bureaucratic tendencies, lower need to control their destiny, lower alienation, and stronger commitment to the reputation of the organization. They also attach more importance to their careers than their classmates do, and they are more likely to have taken steps towards exploring and establishing themselves in a career. Cadets place lower importance than their classmates on the job dimensions of salary, utilization of skills, stability of home life, personal freedom, and geographic desirability, but higher importance on the job dimensions of responsibility, more schooling, chance to be a leader, adventure, feedback on performance, and advancement opportunity. They are more conservative politically than their classmates. Not surprisingly they subscribe more fully to military ideology and they have more favorable attitudes toward ROTC and the Army than their classmates. They also have more accurate information than their classmates about ROTC and the Army.

• These differences between ROTC cadets and their classmates become larger with time, as one moves from the high school to the early college to the late college samples. Because of the cross-sectional nature of the present study, it is not possible to determine the extent to which these widening differences are due to: (a) attrition from the cadet group of cadets with a "deviant" profile; (b) actual changes in cadets brought about by exposure to a military career; or (c) a combination of these two mechanisms.

• There appears to be a sharp break in commitment and in favorability of military-related attitudes between the college and immediate post-college career stages. Military-attitude data from Army officers in the study were consistently and significantly less favorable than data from college cadets. Without longitudinal data, it is again impossible to attribute the decline to: (a) generational differences, or a drop in enthusiasm with increasing age; (b) historical differences: the present group of Army officers joined ROTC in the era of the Vietnam War and may have had lower commitment and less favorable attitudes from the moment they joined ROTC; (c) changes in officers' feelings brought about by disappointment with the Army experience; or (d) a combination of these mechanisms.

CHAPTER 3

DETERMINANTS OF COMMITMENT TO ROTC/ARMY

The previous chapter addressed the question: Who joins the ROTC/Army career path? This chapter will build on the previous one by addressing the question: Among participants in the ROTC/Army career path, who are highly committed to the career path, i.e., who intend to remain in ROTC/Army?

Because the present chapter deals with correlates of ROTC/Army commitment *among those already in the career path*, all the data to be discussed hereon will be restricted to data gathered from the 754 ROTC college cadets and the 634 Army officers--Regular Army as well as Reserve--who participated in the study. Because of their small number, data from the 102 JROTC high school senior cadets will not be included in the discussion.

Two groups of factors and conditions were examined for their relationship to career commitment among cadets and officers:

1. the set of *individual* demographic and socio-psychological characteristics described in the previous chapter;

2. a new set of factors consisting of *environmental* (school, ROTC program, and Army branch-related) influences on commitment.

Demographic and Socio-Psychological Determinants of Commitment

In general, the factors which the previous chapter found to be related to participation in ROTC and membership in the Regular Army were also found to be correlated with commitment among cadets and officers. Thus, commitment was positively related to:

- length of father's military experience
- contact with military families while growing up
- present contact with military families
- the presence of relatives (siblings, cousins, etc.) in ROTC/Army
- perception of favorable military attitudes held by parents and friends
- perception that parents and friends attribute high status to a military career
- moving around a lot while growing up
- low academic ability
- membership in high school JROTC
- high valuation of patriotism and leadership
- low valuation of aestheticism and independence
- intention to pursue a military career
- high interest in physical education activities
- high educational aspirations
- low salary expectations
- greater importance attached to one's career, as opposed to family
- low importance attached to the following job dimensions: geographic desirability, personal freedom, salary, utilization of skills, and stability of home life

- high importance attached to the following job dimensions: responsibility, more schooling, chance to be a leader, and adventure
- high expected (cadet) or actual (officer) Army job satisfaction
- favorable beliefs about ROTC
- favorable beliefs about the Army
- high subscription to military ideology
- high bureaucratic tendencies
- low need for fate control
- low anomy
- high career development
- conservative politics
- more accurate information about ROTC and the Army

In addition it was found that (a) married cadets and officers are more committed to ROTC/Army than single cadets and officers; and (b) Black officers are more committed to an Army career than their White peers. The former finding is probably due to the increased family and financial responsibilities accompanying the married state, which make it more difficult for married people to switch careers, even at a very young stage. The latter finding becomes much more striking when one considers that, as reported in the previous chapter, Whites are overrepresented in the Regular Army and Blacks in the Reserves, and that Regular Army officers have much higher commitment than Reserve officers. Notwithstanding these facts, Black officers are more highly committed than White officers, a finding that probably indicates that Blacks perceive greater opportunities for themselves in the Army than in civilian life, despite their underrepresentation in the Regular Army.

A detailed analysis was made of the relationship between reasons for joining ROTC and subsequent commitment to ROTC/Army.

ROTC cadets were asked "Why did you join ROTC.... What was the most important influence on you? The second most important influence on you? The third most important influence on you?" They were asked to answer the questions using the 14 response categories given in Column 1 of Table 5. The response categories were derived from the preliminary interviews with cadets and officers prior to construction of the survey questionnaire.

Columns 2, 3, and 4 of Table 5 give the number of cadets citing each reason as most influential, second most influential, and third most influential in their decision to join ROTC. Column 2 indicates that there were three predominant major reasons for joining ROTC: (a) to receive an Army commission; (b) because of the financial benefits offered by ROTC; and (c) to satisfy parental desires.

Column 5 gives the mean commitment of the group of cadets citing each of the 14 influences as "most important." The influences are sequenced in order of decreasing commitment attached to each of them. There was a strong relationship between motivation for joining ROTC and commitment. The cadets who had by far the highest commitment were those who joined ROTC to receive an Army commission. These cadets had a mean commitment score of 35.69 (out of a possible 40); the standard deviation of their scores (3.90) was lower than the standard deviation for any other group.

Compare the mean of this Army commission-motivated group with the mean of the group with the lowest commitment, those who joined ROTC because it was an

TABLE 5

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAJOR REASON FOR JOINING ROTC
AND SUBSEQUENT COMMITMENT TO ROTC/ARMY

IMPORTANT INFLUENCES IN DECISION TO JOIN ROTC	NUMBER OF CADETS CITING THIS REASON AS			MEAN COMMITMENT OF THE GROUP OF CADETS CITING REASON AS "MOST INFLUENTIAL"	S.D., COMMITMENT
	MOST INFLUENTIAL	SECOND MOST INFLUENTIAL	THIRD MOST INFLUENTIAL		
Army Commission	130	73	60	35.69	3.90
Patriotism	28	33	67	33.62	4.96
Job Security after graduation	51	101	128	32.91	4.12
Brothers/Sisters	24	30	12	32.05	4.80
Training Opportunities	56	93	83	30.92	5.31
Financial Benefits	122	113	99	30.44	4.75
Parents	109	84	43	30.40	6.54
Adventure	31	48	84	28.69	6.55
Other Relatives	20	26	23	27.87	6.80
Learn Military History	33	37	47	27.17	7.06
Counselors	17	24	13	27.05	6.14
Friends	52	48	33	26.61	7.03
Other[a]	48	10	21	26.36	7.21
Easy Elective/Extra curricular activity	29	29	34	23.08	7.35
Total Group	750	749	747	30.55	6.53

Note. Commitment scores were based on eight items and could range from 8 - 40. This item was unfortunately not asked of the Army officer sample.

[a]Respondents citing this category were asked to specify the particular influence which led them to join ROTC. Most of them mentioned "the draft".

easy elective/extracurricular activity. The mean commitment score of the latter group was only 23.08, two standard deviations below the mean of the Army commission group! Indeed, initial reason for joining ROTC is a strong determinant of eventual commitment to ROTC/Army.

Because the influences are ordered in terms of decreasing commitment, a quick scan down Column 1 of Table 5 reveals the "good" reasons for joining ROTC (in terms of subsequent commitment to the career path) as well as the "bad" reasons. The best reasons for joining ROTC are: to receive an Army commission, to exhibit patriotism, to acquire future job security, and to follow the footsteps of older brothers/sisters in ROTC. The worst reasons are: to enroll in an easy elective; "other" (cadets giving this response category were asked to specify the specific reason; most of them said "because of the draft"); and to join good friends in ROTC. Notice that the good reasons involve actual career exploration; the bad reasons involve mainly avoidance or social motivations.

This motivation for joining ROTC item provides valuable information for ROTC recruitment advertising. During "lean" years, or years when the Army wants to increase the sheer volume of enrollment, recruitment efforts should stress the *popular* reasons for joining: an Army commission, the financial benefits accompanying ROTC, the satisfaction or pride it would give one's parents. However, during years where potential enrollment figures appear to be sufficient or even in surplus, recruitment efforts should stress the *good* reasons for joining, good in terms of subsequent retention (note: ideally, "good" would mean in terms of subsequent *retention* as well as quality *performance;* however, the present study focused only on commitment and not on performance evaluation). Thus, during years when there are sufficient numbers wanting to join ROTC, the Army could stress in its recruitment advertising the opportunity for true career exploration and preparation offered by ROTC as well as the job security and possible Army commission awaiting one after graduation.

Thus far this report has looked at individual demographic and socio-psychological factors which predispose an individual to join ROTC/Army and, having joined, to remain in the career path.

The report will now shift its focus to environmental factors--factors in the school, the ROTC program, and the Army job--which influence cadets' and officers' commitment.

Environmental Determinants of Commitment

The following environmental features were evaluated for the extent to which they influenced commitment among cadets and officers:

1. School-related factors
   - Location of school attended
   - Size of school attended
   - Ownership of school attended

2. ROTC- and Army-related factors

- Expected (cadet) or actual (officer) Army branch
- Expected (cadet) or actual (officer) satisfaction with 21 dimensions of Army job
- Beliefs about ROTC and the Army
- Performance in ROTC and the Army

3. Procedural-related factors

- Possession of an ROTC scholarship
- Financial benefits and contractual obligations
- Relevance of ROTC program to Army job
- Receipt of preferred branch assignment
- Time gap between college graduation and onset of Army service
- Year decided to join ROTC

School-Related Factors

It was found that:

1. An ROTC/Army career is most attractive to rural residents; and least attractive to suburban residents.

2. Size of college attended is significantly related to commitment, with cadets from small schools (less than 3,000 students) having the highest commitment, followed by cadets from medium-sized schools (3,000 - 12,000 students), and finally by cadets from large schools (over 12,000 students).

3. There is no difference in commitment between cadets attending private schools and cadets attending public schools.

ROTC- and Army-Related Factors

Army branch and commitment

ROTC cadets were asked which branch of the Army they intended to join. Army officers were asked which branch of the Army they were currently members of. Responses to this item, along with the mean commitment of cadets and officers in each branch, are presented in Table 6. In the table, the Army branches are presented in order of decreasing commitment of officers currently in the branch.

As far as numbers of cadets and officers in each branch are concerned, there was representation for all branches. The number of cadets in the "other" branch category is proportionately much higher than the number of officers in the same category, presumably because the intending drop-outs among the Basic ROTC cadets as well as the "don't knows" are included in this category.

The popular branch choices among the cadets were (in decreasing order of number of cadets intending to join the branch): medical service corps, infantry and military police corps. Over 10% of cadets sampled intended to join each of these branches. As far as actual branch membership among current Army officers was concerned, the best represented branches were signal corps, infantry, field artillery, and adjutant general's corps. Over 10% of officers sampled were in each of these branches.

TABLE 6

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARMY BRANCH
AND COMMITMENT TO ROTC/ARMY
AMONG ROTC STUDENTS AND ARMY OFFICERS

ARMY BRANCH	COLLEGE ROTC STUDENTS (INTENDED BRANCH)			ARMY OFFICERS (ACTUAL BRANCH)		
	n	MEAN COMMITMENT	STANDARD DEVIATION	n	MEAN COMMITMENT	STANDARD DEVIATION
Military Police Corps	75	32.04	5.75	23	22.86	8.84
Quartermaster Corps	8	29.53	5.04	25	22.56	7.43
Armor	58	34.31	4.37	49	21.63	6.72
Medical Service Corps	91	31.47	4.87	57	21.52	8.11
Adjutant General's Corps	31	30.19	6.25	66	20.86	7.58
Signal Corps	34	33.71	3.59	80	20.71	8.11
Infantry	75	33.19	5.61	73	20.48	8.89
Ordnance	10	32.10	7.22	29	20.40	9.14
Field Artillery	37	31.76	5.17	69	20.32	7.99
Air Defense Artillery	20	31.49	5.39	32	19.91	7.65
Corps of Engineers	55	31.63	4.20	28	19.50	8.50
Military Intelligence	61	31.54	5.53	15	19.43	8.73
Transportation Corps	22	30.67	5.68	45	18.94	6.64
Chemical Corps	6	30.01	6.19	4	18.63	12.26
Other	105	25.32	7.49	14	17.98	7.58
Finance Corps	30	31.12	4.48	25	16.78	8.09
Total Group	718	31.06	6.10	634	20.46	8.02

Note. The ROTC student commitment scores were based on eight items and could range from 8 - 40; the Army officer scores were based on seven items and could range from 7 - 35. Thus the mean commitment scores of the two groups are not directly comparable.

A scan down column 3 ("Mean Commitment" for cadets) reveals that, for the cadet group, the spread of commitment scores across the branches was not as great as the spread across the various motivations for joining ROTC presented in Table 5. This suggests that intended branch is not as strongly related to commitment as motivation for joining ROTC.

For the cadet group, highest commitment was found among those intending to join the armor, signal corps, and infantry branches; lowest commitment among the intending drop-outs and don't knows in the "other" branch category. This result indicates that definitiveness and sharpness of career plans is a good index of career commitment among students. For the Army officer group, highest commitment was found among the military police corps, quartermaster corps, armor, and medical service corps branches; lowest commitment among the finance corps and "other" branch categories.

Expected/actual satisfaction with Army job and commitment

As described in the previous chapter, cadets and officers were asked to rate an Army job on 21 job dimensions. Not surprisingly, satisfaction on each dimension was positively related to commitment to remaining in ROTC/Army. An interesting finding was the fact that all 21 correlations for Army officers were higher than the corresponding correlations for ROTC students. This is undoubtedly due to the greater certainty attached to the officer ratings, which are based on actual experiences in the Army, instead of expectations.

For cadets, the dimensions for which expected satisfaction correlated most highly with commitment were (in descending order of correlation magnitude): chance to be a leader, adventure, responsibility, and self-improvement. Expected satisfaction on each of these dimensions correlated > .25 with commitment. For officers, the dimensions for which actual satisfaction correlated most highly with commitment were (again in descending order of correlation magnitude): interesting/challenging job, contribution to society, and self-improvement. Satisfaction on each of these dimensions correlated > .40 with commitment.

Beliefs about ROTC and the Army and commitment

As described in the previous chapter, cadets and officers were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with 26 beliefs about ROTC and 28 beliefs about the Army.

It was found that:

1. Not surprisingly, favorable beliefs about ROTC and the Army were almost universally associated with high commitment.

2. Beliefs about the Army correlated more strongly with commitment to ROTC/Army than did beliefs about ROTC. The median correlation between the beliefs about ROTC items and commitment was .17 for both cadets and officers. The median correlation between the beliefs about the Army items and commitment was .23 for cadets and .28 for officers.

3. As with the Army job satisfaction ratings discussed in the previous section, higher correlations between beliefs about the Army and commitment were obtained for the officer than for the cadet sample. As stated previously, this finding is attributable to the greater experience-base on which the officer ratings are based. Officers are surer about what is in store for them if they remain in the Army; thus, their ratings of the Army determine more strongly their intention to remain in the career path.

4. For the most part, the items which were negatively or insignificantly related to commitment among the beliefs about ROTC items had to do with utilization of ROTC as a vehicle for attainment of ends other than an Army commission, to wit: "Joining ROTC satisfied the desires of my parents and/or other relatives;" "Being a member of ROTC is a great way to earn money while in college;" "ROTC provides a means for having a good time before settling down" (all not significantly related to commitment for the officer group); "Joining ROTC helps postpone decisions about what to do after college;" and "Joining ROTC is a good way to have a job guaranteed after graduation" (both not significantly or negatively related to commitment for the cadet as well as officer groups).

Respondents who agreed that ROTC satisfies these (admittedly positive) instrumental ends did not tend to be high in commitment, presumably because they joined ROTC for the said instrumental ends rather than to truly explore a military career. Data examined in a preceding section regarding the relationship between reasons for joining ROTC and commitment supports this explanation of the data.

Further support is found in the fact that the ROTC belief item with the *highest* mean correlation with commitment for the cadet and officer groups was "ROTC leads to a military commitment that is too long." Highly committed cadets and officers *disagreed strongly* with this statement, presumably because for one truly exploring a career, a two to four year obligated service stint is not a long period. For one with low commitment, who joined ROTC for other instrumental benefits (to satisfy parents, to earn money in college, to have a good time, to have a guaranteed job after graduation, to postpone decisions about what to do after college), two to four years may seem like a high price to pay. In the words of one respondent, the obligated duty tour for such a person becomes a "stiff sentence."

Performance in ROTC/Army and commitment

Performance in ROTC/Army--as determined by grade point average in ROTC and by an individual's subjective evaluation of personal performance--was positively related to commitment to ROTC/Army.

Recall from a previous discussion that ROTC/Army participation and commitment were generally found to be *negatively* related to academic performance, as measured by average high school and college grades.

These two findings, jointly considered, suggest that high academic aptitude may not be the most salient determinant of good performance in ROTC/Army.

Procedural-Related Factors

The term "procedural" is used in this report to refer to ROTC/Army program-related factors which are more manipulable by policy than any of the previously described influences on commitment. The following procedural factors were studied for their impact on commitment: (a) possession of an ROTC scholarship, (b) financial benefits and contractual obligations, (c) relevance of ROTC program to Army job, (d) receipt of a preferred branch assignment, (e) time gap between college graduation and onset of Army service, and (f) year decision to join ROTC was made.

Possession of an ROTC scholarship and commitment

It was found that college cadets holding an ROTC scholarship were more committed to ROTC/Army than cadets without a scholarship. However this positive relationship disappeared when the background variables of race, sex, and father's education were controlled for.

Among Army officers, there was no relationship between possession of an ROTC scholarship while in college and intention to remain in the Army beyond the period of obligated Army service.

These findings show that career commitment is strongly influenced by the freedom with which the initial participation/commitment decision is made. Participation decisions that are based heavily on extrinsic motivators (such as financial benefits and scholarships) are not likely to result in subsequent high commitment.

This finding does not, however, negate the utility of the ROTC scholarship program. The present study focuses on only one index of a "good" cadet or officer, that of his/her commitment to the ROTC/Army career path. It does not touch on another, equally important, index of a "good" cadet or officer, that of his/her competence in performing job duties related to the career. Since other data from this study show that, even with the ROTC scholarship program, ROTC students report *lower* academic abilities than their classmates, it may well be the case that the scholarship program is essential to attracting cadets and officers who would perform well on that second index of "goodness," that of quality performance.

Further research can establish the relationship between possession of an ROTC scholarship and performance among retained officers

Financial benefits, contractual obligations, and commitment

ROTC cadets were asked "Would you have joined ROTC if it did not offer any financial benefits?[2] Army officers were asked "After college, would you have joined the Army if you did not have any contractual obligations?"

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[2]Financial benefits offered by ROTC include $100/month stipend for all Advanced ROTC students. In addition scholarships are available for both Basic and Advanced ROTC students. These scholarships pay full tuition, books, and laboratory fees plus $100/month for the duration of the scholarship.

It was found that, not surprisingly (a) cadets who would have joined ROTC even if it did not offer any financial benefits had much higher commitment than cadets who were motivated by financial benefits; (b) Army officers who would have joined the Army even if their ROTC contract did not exist had much higher commitment than officers who joined the Army primarily to fulfill their contractual obligations.

However, it was also found that (a) 21% of cadets would *not* have joined ROTC if it had not offered any financial benefits; (b) 43% of Army officers would *not* have joined the Army after college if they had not been contractually obligated to do so.

Thus, unless the Army is willing to give up these proportions of cadets and officers, it appears that some financial benefits and some form of contract are a necessity. In setting policy on these matters, how does one combine the finding that benefits and contracts attract people to ROTC/Army with the finding they they correlate with subsequent *low commitment* among those they attract? The answer is found in the social psychological literature on attitude change produced as a function of the magnitude of reward paid to perform the discrepant behavior. The literature consistently says: if you *must* pay a person to perform a discrepant act (in the present case, offer him/her a financial reward to join ROTC/Army), offer the *minimum* amount necessary to get the person to perform the act. Such minimum reward is associated with the greatest subsequent attitude change, i.e., the greatest reduction in perceived discrepancy of the act with one's true feelings. In the present case, offering of financial benefits large enough to attract the numbers the Army needs to ROTC, but not so large as to be perceived by recipients as the sole reason for their joining, should lead to the greatest subsequent commitment to ROTC/Army. Further research can establish what this appropriate "minimum incentive" is.

Relevance of ROTC program to Army job and commitment

Relevance of ROTC program attended in college to present Army job was strongly and positively correlated with career commitment among Army officers.

Receipt of preferred branch assignment, time gap between college graduation and Army Basic Course, and commitment

There was no relationship between receipt of preferred branch assignment, time gap between college graduation and onset of Army service, and commitment.

One concludes that officers are able to adjust to Army-assigned branches and to delays in the start of their period of obligated Army service. These "disappointments" do not affect their subsequent commitment to the Army career path.

Year decision to join ROTC was made and commitment

College cadets were asked when they decided to join ROTC; 2.5% of them said in grade school, 10.5% in early high school, 27.4% in late high school, 21.4% during the summer before entering college, 24.1% in the college freshman year, and 14.0% in the college sophomore year.

Cadets who decided to join ROTC early--in high school or early college--had higher commitment to ROTC/Army than the late joiners. Further investigation of this finding revealed that late joiners (cadets who decided to enroll in their sophomore year in college) (a) perceive the Army as offering the individual less personal control and individuality, and (b) are more motivated by ROTC's financial benefits than cadets who made the decision to enroll during their freshman year or earlier.

It is possible to account for these findings in at least two ways. First, it may be that those cadets who make the ROTC enrollment decision early do so while considering only a limited range of decision parameters and, once enrolled, do not pause to reflect further on negative attributes of the decision. Those who make the decision later, however, do so while considering a wider range of influences and factors (possibly including financial benefits, for example) and may have somewhat less intrinsic motivation upon enrollment than those who enroll earlier. Thus, it may be that sophomore joiners were "pushed" more by external forces such as financial benefits, and less impelled by intrinsic ROTC/Army attributes.

A second possible basis for the finding is that late joiners have had less overall exposure to the ROTC program. Given the seemingly direct positive relationship between ROTC exposure and ROTC/Army commitment, this factor could well operate to result in a lower level of commitment among those who enrolled in the sophomore year or later.

These two explanations are, of course, not mutually exclusive and both sets of processes may be operative in terms of influencing career commitment.

These procedural-related findings question the ability of the ROTC scholarship program to retain officers beyond the period of obligated service. They speak out for the utility of the Basic ROTC program (the "early-joiners") in attracting the truly committed. They call for striving to make ROTC programs relevant to subsequent Army jobs. Most important of all, they document the fact that the truly committed will join and remain in a career path with or without financial benefits or contracts.

Summary

- In general, the demographic and socio-psychological factors which the previous chapter found to be related to participation in ROTC and membership in the Regular Army were also found to be correlated with commitment among cadets and officers. Thus commitment was positively related to: length of father's military experience; contact with military families while growing up; present contact with military families; the presence of relatives (siblings, cousins, etc.) in ROTC/Army; perception of favorable military attitudes held by parents and friends; perception that parents and friends attribute high status to a military career; moving around a lot while growing up; low academic ability; membership in high school JROTC; high valuation of partiotism and leadership; low valuation of aestheticism and independence; intention to pursue a military career; high interest in physical education activities; high educational aspirations; low salary expectations; greater importance attached to one's career, as opposed to family; low

importance attached to the following job dimensions: geographic desirability, personal freedom, salary, utilization of skills, and stability of home life; high importance attached to the following job dimensions: responsibility, more schooling, chance to be a leader, and adventure; high expected (cadet) or actual (officer) Army job satisfaction; favorable beliefs about ROTC; favorable beliefs about the Army; high subscription to military ideology; high bureaucratic tendencies; low need for fate control; low anomy; high career development; conservative politics; and, more accurate information about ROTC and the Army.

- Early exposure to a career path increases subsequent participation in and commitment to the career path. (a) A strong career modelling effect was found in the study, with proportionately more ROTC students and Army officers having military career fathers than non-ROTC students. Also, within the ROTC student and Army officer groups, those having a military father are more committed to ROTC/Army than those having a civilian father. (b) Proportionately more ROTC students than non-ROTC students have relatives (siblings, cousins) in ROTC or the military. (c) Participation in high school Junior ROTC is positively related to ROTC/Army commitment among ROTC college students. Attendance at a high school with Junior ROTC is positively related to ROTC/Army commitment among high school students, even when Junior ROTC participants are excluded from the computation. (d) ROTC cadets who decide to join ROTC before their sophomore year in college have higher commitment to ROTC/Army than ROTC cadets who decide to join ROTC in their sophomore year.

- The more intrinsic or free one's initial motivation in joining ROTC, the greater the likelihood of subsequent commitment to ROTC/Army. (a) Cadets who join ROTC to receive an Army commission or from patriotic motives are much more committed to ROTC/Army than cadets who join ROTC to receive its financial benefits or to avoid the draft. (b) There is no evidence that scholarships, a strong external inducement to ROTC participation, are able to retain qualified officers beyond their period of obligated Army service. (c) Respondents who perceive ROTC as a vehicle for achieving (admittedly positive) instrumental ends--to satisfy parents, to earn money in college, to have a good time, to have a guaranteed job after graduation, to postpone decisions about what to do after college--tend to have low commitment to ROTC/Army, presumably because they joined ROTC for these instrumental ends rather than to truly explore a military career.

- Regular Army officers are much more committed to an Army career than Active Duty Reserve officers.

- Proportionately fewer Black ROTC graduates (compared to their White peers) are selected for a Regular Army commission. Despite this underrepresentation in the Regular Army and consequent overrepresentation in the Reserves, Black Army officers have higher commitment to ROTC/Army than White Army officers.

- Officers who value dimensions which the Army satisfies are more committed to an Army career than officers who value dimensions which the Army does not satisfy. The dimensions on which an Army officer job received most favorable ratings were: chance to be a leader, adventure, responsibility, advancement opportunity, and self-improvement. Importance ratings assigned to these dimensions were positively related to commitment among cadets and officers. The dimensions on which an Army officer job received least favorable ratings were: stability of home life, personal freedom, geographic desirability, contribution to society, utilization of skills, and family contentment. Importance ratings assigned to these dimensions were negatively related or unrelated to commitment among cadets and officers.

CHAPTER 4

THE ROTC/ARMY CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS

Chapter 2 discussed the question: Who participates in ROTC? Chapter 3 discussed the question: Who among ROTC cadets and ROTC-graduate Army officers are committed to remain in the ROTC/Army career path?

The present chapter will combine the foci of the two preceding chapters by addressing the questions:

1. How do commitment and commitment-related values and attitudes change with increasing exposure to ROTC?

2. How does commitment develop in an individual? And is the process of career commitment different for various population subgroups, e.g., for Blacks vs. Whites?

Time-Related Changes in Commitment, Personal Values, and Commitment-Related Attitudes

The study collected questionnaire-type data from ROTC college cadets and Army officers for seven different cross-sectional samples:

- ROTC freshmen
- ROTC sophomores
- ROTC juniors
- ROTC seniors
- Army officers early in their period of obligated service (first year)
- Army officers midway through their period of obligated service
- Army officers late in their period of obligated service (last six months)

These seven samples will henceforth be referred to as constituting the *Army path* group.

Questionnaire type data were also collected from non-ROTC college students for four different cross-sectional samples:

- non-ROTC freshmen
- non-ROTC sophomores
- non-ROTC juniors
- non-ROTC seniors

These four samples will henceforth be referred to as constituting the *non-Army path* group.

It is possible to use the seven Army path samples as though they were a single group studied longitudinally over time, and the four non-Army path samples as though they were a second group studied longitudinally, and then to note the trends or changes that occur as one progresses from the first to the last data collection point (i.e., from ROTC freshmen to Army officers late in their period of obligation for the Army path group; and from non-ROTC freshmen to non-ROTC seniors for the non-Army path group).

Because the two groups are only *simulated* longitudinal samples, all trends noted should be interpreted with extreme caution. Four major explanations may *lie beneath the trend findings*:

1. The observed trends may be due to the various sample groups getting progressively *older* and more mature. This explanation is the most easily investigated in the present study because of the existence of a non-Army path comparison group, at least for the college sample. However, no comparison sample exists for the Army officer data.

2. The observed trends may be due to the different time frame and *socio-political context* in which decisions to join the ROTC/Army career path were made by the various samples.

3. The observed trends may be due to greater homogeneity in the older samples brought about by career path *drop-outs* among deviants from the military mold.

4. The observed trends may be due to *actual changes in the participant group* brought about by the ROTC/Army experience.

Despite the inability to attribute causality to one or more of these sources, the data remain interesting and important, because: (a) the trends to be described provide insight into the changing demographic and socio-psychological profile of participants in the ROTC/Army career, and (b) the trends to be described can be used to generate hypotheses with a firm empirical basis, for further testing in future longitudinal investigations.

Trends in Career Commitment

Commitment Trends across the Cross-Sectional Samples

There was only one commitment-related item asked of high school, college, and Army officer respondents. This was the item "How likely are you to make a career of the Army?" It was found that:

1. High school students report a significantly greater likelihood of making a career in the Army than non-ROTC college students.

2. College ROTC cadets report a significantly greater likelihood of making a career in the Army than Army officers.

The first finding is not surprising in light of the fact that the high school sample represents a more general population of students, many of whom--those in schools not offering JROTC--have not yet had the opportunity to participate in the ROTC/Army career path, whereas the college non-ROTC sample represents a population of students who have had the opportunity (which they rejected) to participate in ROTC.

The second finding is somewhat surprising since Army officers are further along the career path than ROTC cadets and thus have a greater personal investment in pursuing a career already started. However, in light of the already mentioned discrepancy in the military related values and attitudes of cadets and officers (with cadets consistently reflecting more favorable attitudes towards ROTC/Army than officers), this discrepancy in commitment could probably have been predicted.

Commitment Trends within the ROTC and Army Group

An analysis of commitment trends within the Army path group showed that, among ROTC cadets, commitment rises gradually from the freshman to the junior year, and then falls slightly at the senior year. Among Active Duty Reserve officers, commitment drops steeply with increasing number of months served in the Army; the drop is most marked in the last six months of obligated service. Among Regular Army officers, commitment drops slightly after the first year of obligated service but goes back up again in the last six months of obligated service.

The extremely low commitment exhibited by Reservists in their last six months of obligated service is not surprising. These are the people soon "getting out" of the career path.

Trends in Personal Values and Commitment-Related Attitudes

Two general, significant findings emerged from trend analyses of career commitment-related values, attitudes, and job importance and satisfaction ratings:

1. Many more significant trends were identified for the Army path group than for the non-Army path group. This finding emerged for each set of characteristics studied. As pointed out previously, the data on which the trends were computed were cross-sectional in nature, and thus do not establish the *cause* of these results. The changes may have resulted from selection/drop-out processes, or from actual changes in ROTC/Army participants brought about by the ROTC/Army environments, or from a combination of these mechanisms.

2. Within the Army path group, while the college ROTC and Army sample data were consistent within themselves, trends obtained across the two samples were often surprisingly different. That is to say, the college ROTC data were very different from the Army officer data, despite the fact that these two samples were part of the same career path group. This suggests that social-political-economic conditions at the time the Army sample was recruited for ROTC may have produced a group of individuals substantially different with respect to values, attitudes and job satisfaction concepts held by the current sample of ROTC individuals. Further work should be undertaken to evaluate ROTC and Army career participation and commitment against the social-political-economic environment at the time of entry.

The next three sections of this report will illustrate these general findings by discussing results obtained from trend analyses of (a) personal values, (b) socio-psychological characteristics, and (c) expected/actual Army job satisfaction. Trends on these data sets for both the Army and non-Army path groups will be compared and contrasted.

Trends in Personal Values

With respect to the Personal Value characteristics which Chapters 2 and 3 found to be *positively* related to ROTC/Army participation and commitment, the following significant findings were obtained:

1. Leadership, Patriotism, and Recognition become more important with time for both the Army and non-Army path groups, with the Army group as a whole rating the values as more important than the non-Army group.

2. Conformity and Acceptance of Authority become less important with time for both the Army and non-Army path groups, with the Army group again rating the values as more important than the non-Army group.

With respect to the Personal Value characteristics which Chapters 2 and 3 found to be *negatively* related to ROTC/Army participation and commitment, it was found that:

1. Ratings of Support, Independence and Equalitarianism did not show much change across time for the Army or non-Army path groups, but the Army ratings were consistently lower than the non-Army ratings.

2. The trends identified for Benevolence and Religiousness were opposite for the Army and non-Army groups, with the non-Army group showing decreasing importance across time for these values, and the Army group showing increasing importance over the college time span, followed by decreasing importance over the Army time span. Again, Army group ratings of these values were consistently lower than non-Army group ratings.

Trends in Socio-Psychological Characteristics

The six attitude variables--Attitudes towards ROTC, Attitudes towards the Army, Need for Fate Control, Bureaucratic Tendency, Subscription to Military Ideology, and Anomy--all showed the same trend with respect to time (see Figure 6 for an illustrative trend curve). As Figure 6 illustrates, the trend curve for the Army path was upward (increasing importance/favorability of attitudes) over the college time span, followed by a downward swing (decreasing importance/favorability of attitudes) over the Army time span. The trend curve for the non-Army path was linear downward (decreasing importance/favorability of attitudes) over the college time span. For all six attitudes, the trend line for the Army path was above that of the non-Army path, indicating that the attitudes are indeed salient to military career decision-making.

Notice from the figure that attitudes of Army officers were significantly less favorable than attitudes held by ROTC cadets. This was true for all six attitudes studied. As previously mentioned, it is impossible, given the cross-sectional data available, to attribute the differences to maturation effects (a drop in enthusiasm with increasing age), program effects (a drop in enthusiasm because of failure of the Army to meet cadets' high expectations) or historical effects (prior negative attitudes on the part of the present crop of ROTC-graduate Army officers owing to the conflicts associated with the Vietnam War era draft while they were students).

Trends in Expected/Actual Satisfaction with an Army Job

Trends in expected (student data) and actual (officer data) satisfaction with 21 dimensions of an Army officer job were studied (see Figure 3, page 18. for a list of the 21 job dimensions).

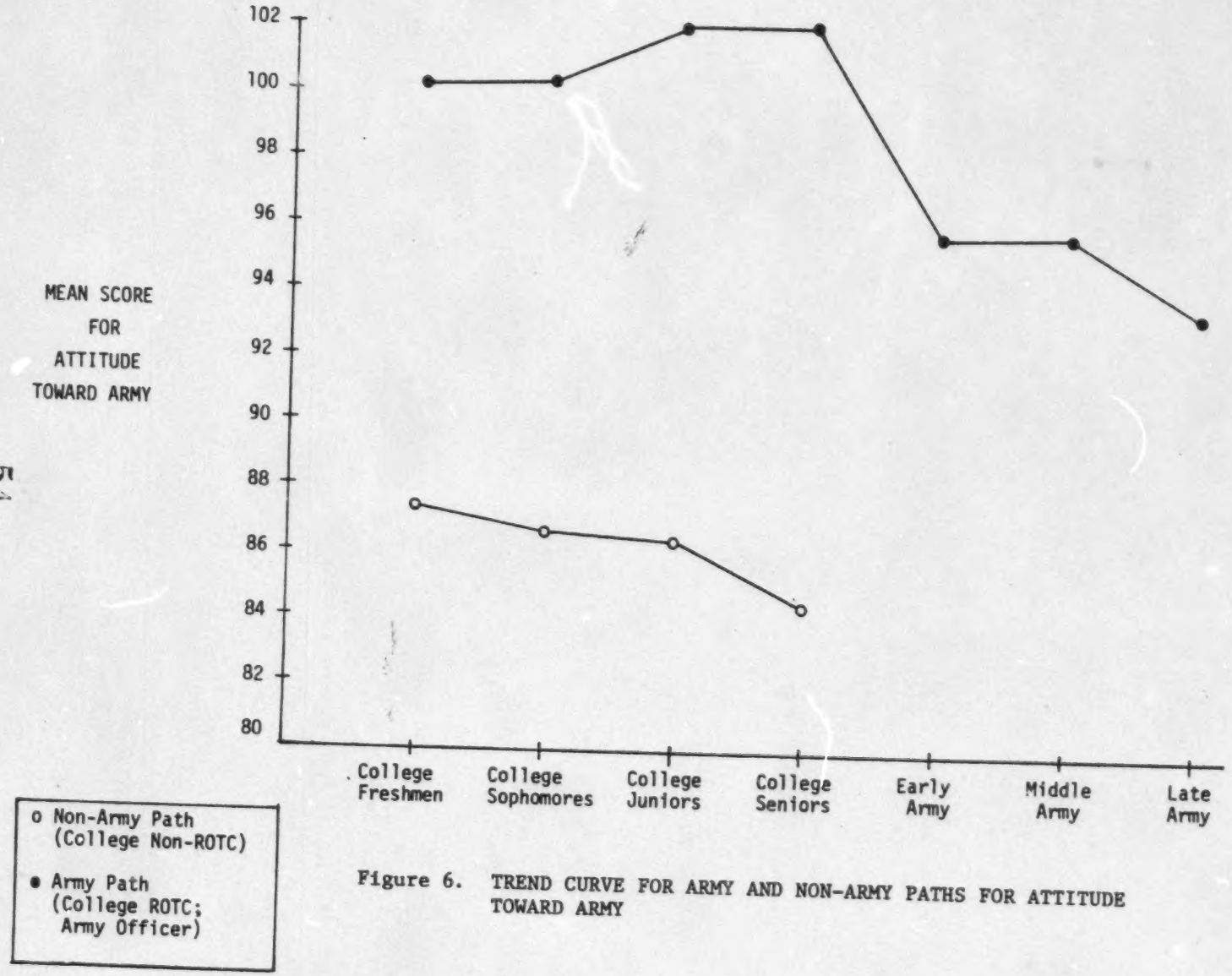


Figure 6. TREND CURVE FOR ARMY AND NON-ARMY PATHS FOR ATTITUDE TOWARD ARMY

Only one significant trend was obtained for the non-Army data. For the ROTC/Army data, every one of the 21 job dimensions exhibited a significant linear trend, with all but two also showing significant quadratic trends. The general trend for the Army path group appeared to be: increasing expected satisfaction for the college freshman through college junior time span, with a reversal (lower expected satisfaction) at the college senior year, followed by a general decrease in actual satisfaction through the Army time span. Figure 7 shows an illustrative trend curve for the job dimension "feedback on performance." The other 20 job dimension curves were strikingly similar to this illustrative curve.

Notice how the general trends in previous data sets were once again found here: (a) A greater number of meaningful trends were obtained for the more homogeneous ROTC student group than for the heterogeneous non-ROTC group; and (b) There was a rise in favorability of military-related expectations/experiences among ROTC cadets in the first three college years, followed by a decline in favorability during the senior and especially the Army officer years. For this set of data, the sharp discrepancy between cadet and officer data is undoubtedly attributable, at least in part, to the failure of real-world experiences to live up to idealistic expectations held while in college.

Further research can look into the causes of the trends obtained among ROTC/Army participants. Of particular importance is the issue of the extent to which these trends and changes are in fact produced by and therefore attributable to the ROTC/Army experience.

How Does Career Commitment Develop?

Having examined in detail the determinants of participation in and commitment to an Army career, and having looked into the nature of changes that accompany increasing exposure to ROTC/Army, the next issue to be discussed is: How does commitment develop in an individual? Is it possible to describe the causal sequence leading from the demographic background characteristics through the personality and socio-psychological characteristics to commitment?

The model presented in Chapter 1 suggests what the career commitment process might look like. According to the model, certain primary and secondary socialization variables, coupled with innate aptitudes, cause a person to have a value-interest-aspiration profile compatible with military life. Springing from such a value set are clusters of military-related attitudes and beliefs. Positive attitudes could lead to career exploration in ROTC. Positive experiences in ROTC strengthen a person's resolve to remain in ROTC, and cause him to have high expectations of Army life. If these expectations are met by a satisfying experience as an Army officer, further heightened career commitment results.

The model's postulates were tested by means of a statistical technique called path analysis. Path analysis involves (a) ordering the components of a process--in the present case, the process of career commitment--into a causal sequence; and then (b) determining the strength of the relationship, or impact, of the process' early components on the process' later components. The strength of the relationship is indicated by a number, called a "path

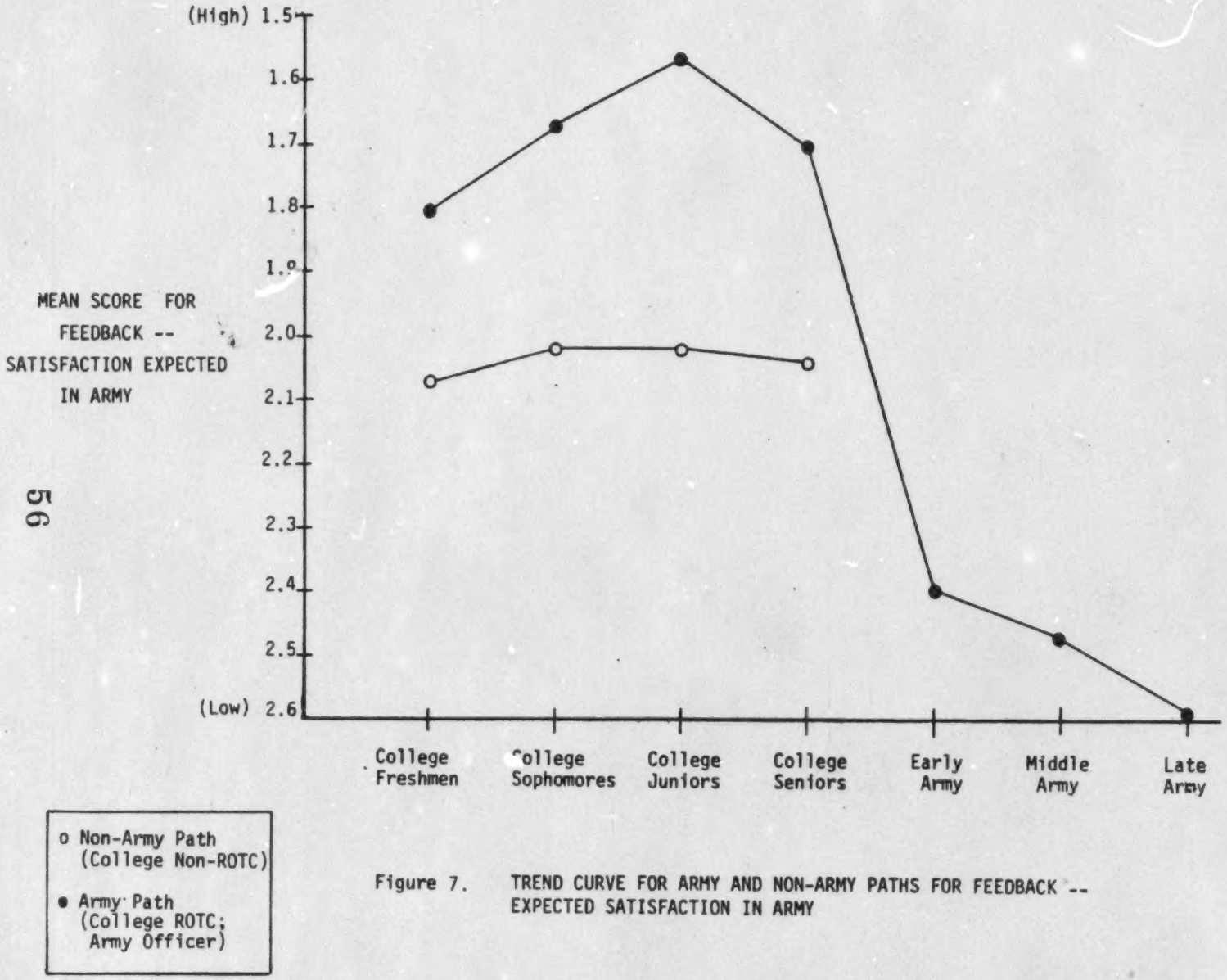
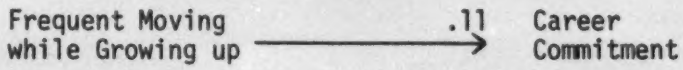


Figure 7. TREND CURVE FOR ARMY AND NON-ARMY PATHS FOR FEEDBACK -- EXPECTED SATISFACTION IN ARMY

coefficient," which can range from -1.00 (strong negative influence) to +1.00 (strong positive influence).

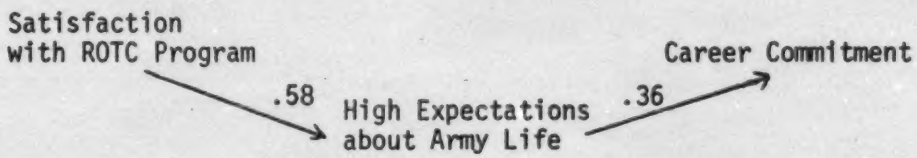
For example, the expression

means that satisfaction with one's Army job has a moderately strong, positive impact on career commitment.[3] The expression



means that frequent moving while growing up has a smaller, positive effect on commitment.

The expression



means that satisfaction with one's ROTC program leads to high expectations about Army life, and it is these high expectations which cause career commitment. Note that there is no direct arrow from satisfaction with ROTC program to career commitment, meaning that the effect of the ROTC program on career commitment is indirect, and operates through the Army expectations variable.

Selection and Measurement of Variables for the Empirical Path Models

Two path models were developed, the first representing the process of career commitment among Army officers, the second representing the process of career commitment among ROTC cadets. Table 7 gives the component variables of each model; the table also maps the components to the theoretical career commitment model laid out in Figure 1 (Chapter 1), and gives details on how each component was scored.

As Table 7 shows, the officer and cadet models differ only with respect to a few of the variables involved. The first six variables of the two models are identical: military socialization, frequent moving while growing up, parents encourage/approve of military career, value set compatible with military life, subscription to military ideology, and search for chance to be a leader and for adventure in a job. The models for officers and cadets diverge with respect to the subsequent variables because officers have actually experienced Army life, while cadets' perceptions of the Army are limited to mere expectations.

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[3]The "path coefficient" of .35 is interpreted as follows: for every one standard deviation increase in Army job satisfaction, there is a .35 standard deviation increase in commitment.

TABLE 7

COMPONENTS OF THE EMPIRICAL MODELS
OF CAREER COMMITMENT FOR ARMY OFFICERS AND FOR ROTC STUDENTS

BOX NO. IN SPECIFIC EMPIRICAL MODEL	BOX NO. IN GENERAL TENTATIVE MODEL	NAME OF VARIABLE	SCHEMA FOR CONSTRUCTING VARIABLE
		EMPIRICAL MODEL FOR ARMY OFFICERS	
X_{1A}	1	Military Socialization	Sum of responses to items Length of father's military experience + Contact with military families while growing up[a] + Present contact with military families[a]
X_{1B}	1	Frequent moving while growing up	Responses to item Number of communities lived in while growing up[a]
X_2	3	Parents encourage/approve of military career	Sum of response to items Parents' opinion of military + Parents' rating of an Army officer career (as perceived by respondent)
X_3	4	Value set compatible with military life	1) Values were rank ordered from 1 to 14 in accordance with decreasing commitment attached to them by Army officer group as whole (see Table 5.10) 2) Value set = 3 (rank assigned to most important value) + 2 (rank assigned to second most important value) + 3 (rank assigned to third most important value) - 3 (rank assigned to least important value) - 2 (rank assigned to second least important value) - 1 (rank assigned to third least important value)
X_4	5	Subscription to military ideology	Score on military ideology scale
X_5	5	Look for chance to be leader and for adventure in job	Sum of importance ratings attached to the job dimensions, chance to be leader[a] and adventure[a]
X_6	13	Would have joined Army even without ROTC contract	Response to item Would have joined Army after college even without ROTC contract
X_7	I4	High satisfaction with Army job	Score on attitudes towards the Army scale + Response to item How satisfied are you with your Army job
X_8	dependent variable	Commitment to an Army career	Score on career commitment scale
		EMPIRICAL MODEL FOR ROTC CADETS	
X_{1A}	1	Military socialization	Same as for Army officers (see above)
X_{1B}	1	Frequent moving while growing up	"
X_2	3	Parents encourage/approve of military career	"
X_3	4	Value set compatible with military life	"
X_4	5	Subscription to military ideology	"
X_5	5	Look for chance to be a leader and for adventure in job	"
X_6	8	Join ROTC to get Army commission or for patriotic reasons	1) Important influences in decision to join ROTC were rank ordered from 1 to 15 in accordance with decreasing commitment attached to them by cadet group as a whole (see Table 5.24) 2) Score on this motivation variable = rank assigned to respondent's most important influence in joining ROTC
X_7	9	Satisfaction with ROTC program	Score on attitudes towards ROTC scale
X_8	11	High expectations re Army life	Score on attitudes towards the Army scale
X_9	dependent variable	Commitment to ROTC/Army	Score on career commitment scale

[a]These variables were rescored so that 5 = response category positively related to commitment, and 1 = response category negatively related to commitment.

What the model says is that commitment among Army officers is caused by variables X_{1A} to X_7 in Table 7. The order of the variables in Table 7 gives their order in the hypothesized causal sequence. Thus X_{1A} and X_{1B} are hypothesized to impact on, or affect, X_2 through X_8. X_2 is hypothesized to impact on X_3 through X_8, etc. A similar interpretation may be made of the variables included in the ROTC cadet model.

There are two variables that are not found in the model's components as listed in Table 7, although they would seem a priori to influence to a considerable extent the process of commitment: race and, in the case of cadets, the extent of the obligations they have contracted with the Army. There is strong reason to believe that these two variables interact with the model's component variables in a *non-linear* manner, by affecting the existing *relationships* among the variables. Because path analysis can only deal with linear relationships among variables, the empirical models were estimated separately for subsamples distinguished by the "treatment" variables. Thus, separate path models were computed for Black and White officers, and for cadets in Basic and Advanced ROTC. In order that all cadets in the Basic ROTC subsample would be truly free of all obligations to the Army, cadets in Basic ROTC who possessed an ROTC scholarship (and who are thus obligated to four years of active duty service in the Army) were dropped from the Basic ROTC subsample.

Figures 8 and 9 give the final path models for White and Black officers, respectively. Figures 10 and 11 then give the final path models for Basic ROTC cadets without a scholarship, and for Advanced ROTC cadets.

The reader interested in a detailed discussion of the findings contained in these path models is referred to the full report on which this management summary is based (Card, J. J. et al., Development of a ROTC/Army Career Commitment Model. Palo Alto: American Institutes for Research, 1975). Only the highlights will be listed here. It was found that:

1. The models explained about 50% of the variance in the career commitment of officers and about 40% of the variance in the career commitment of cadets.

2. The primary and secondary socialization variables, especially frequent moving while growing up and parental encouragement/approval of a military career, were more highly related to Black officer commitment than to White officer commitment.

3. Job satisfaction was the primary direct cause of commitment among both officer groups, but this variable was more salient in affecting White officers' commitment.

4. Commitment of White officers was to a large extent determined by predispositions present just before entering Army service. Commitment of Black officers, on the other hand, was determined directly by parental encouragement or by experiences occurring while in the Army.

5. For the student ROTC group, satisfaction with the ROTC program did not affect commitment directly but rather indirectly by affecting cadets' expectations about Army life.

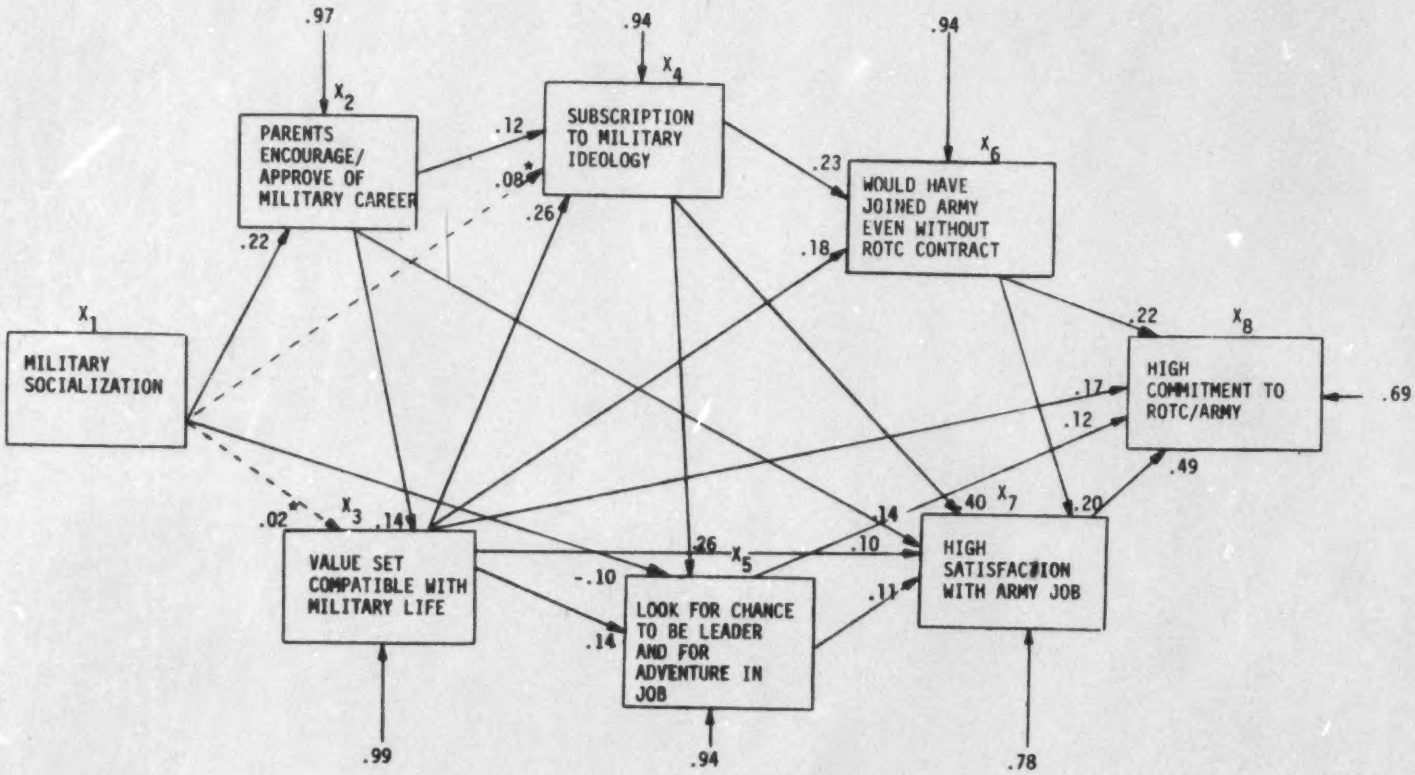

Figure 8. A PATH MODEL OF THE CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS FOR ARMY OFFICERS (DATA FROM 539 WHITE OFFICERS)

Note: All paths below .10 were eliminated prior to computation of these final paths.

------- Insignificant Paths

* Insignificant Path Coefficients

_____ Significant Paths

X_{1B} does not appear in this model because its effects on the other variables were discovered to be insignificant during the final estimation procedure.

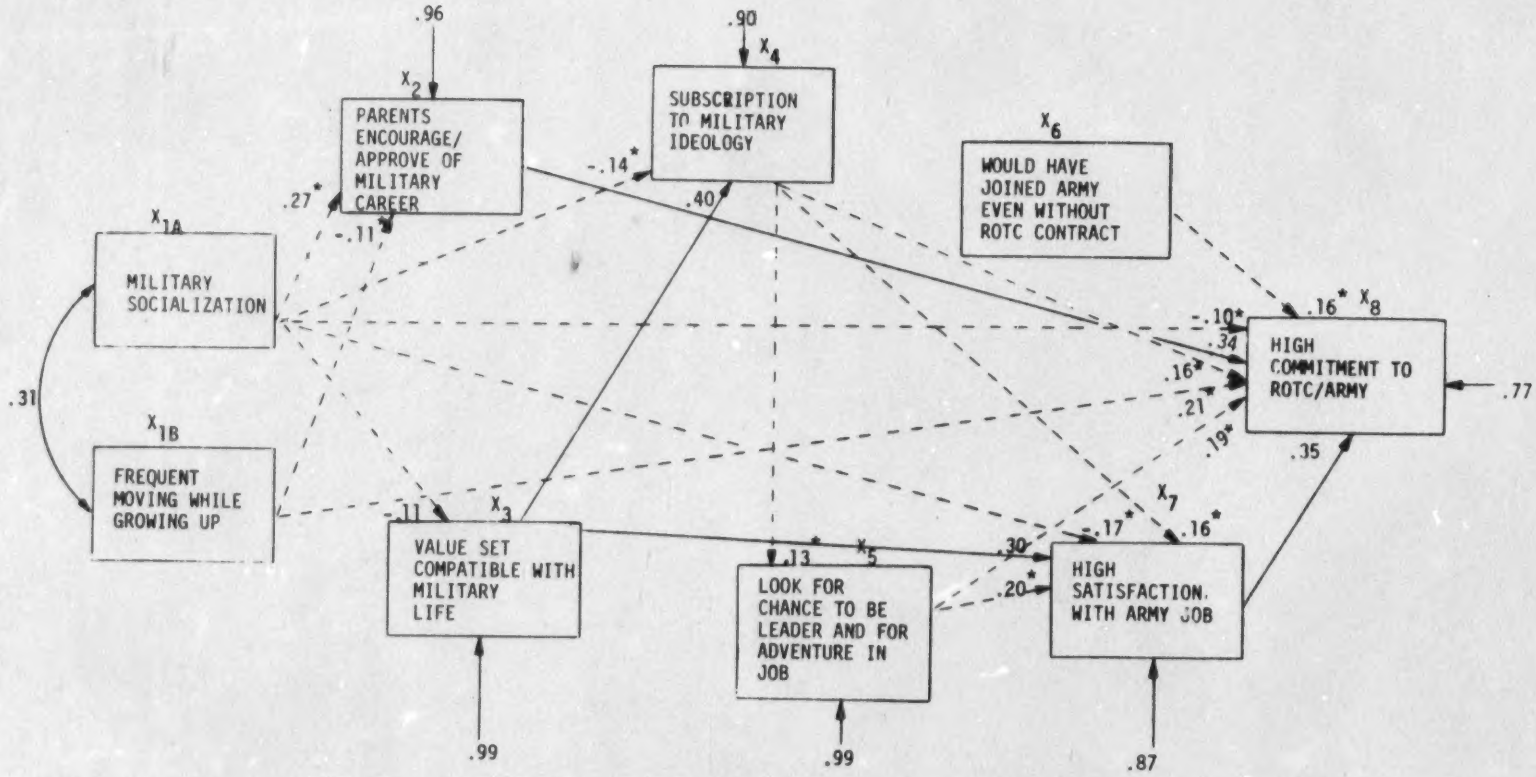

Figure 9. A PATH MODEL OF THE CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS FOR ARMY OFFICERS (DATA FROM 57 BLACK OFFICERS)

Note: All paths below .10 were eliminated prior to computation of these final paths.

------- Insignificant Paths

* Insignificant Path Coefficients

_____ Significant Paths

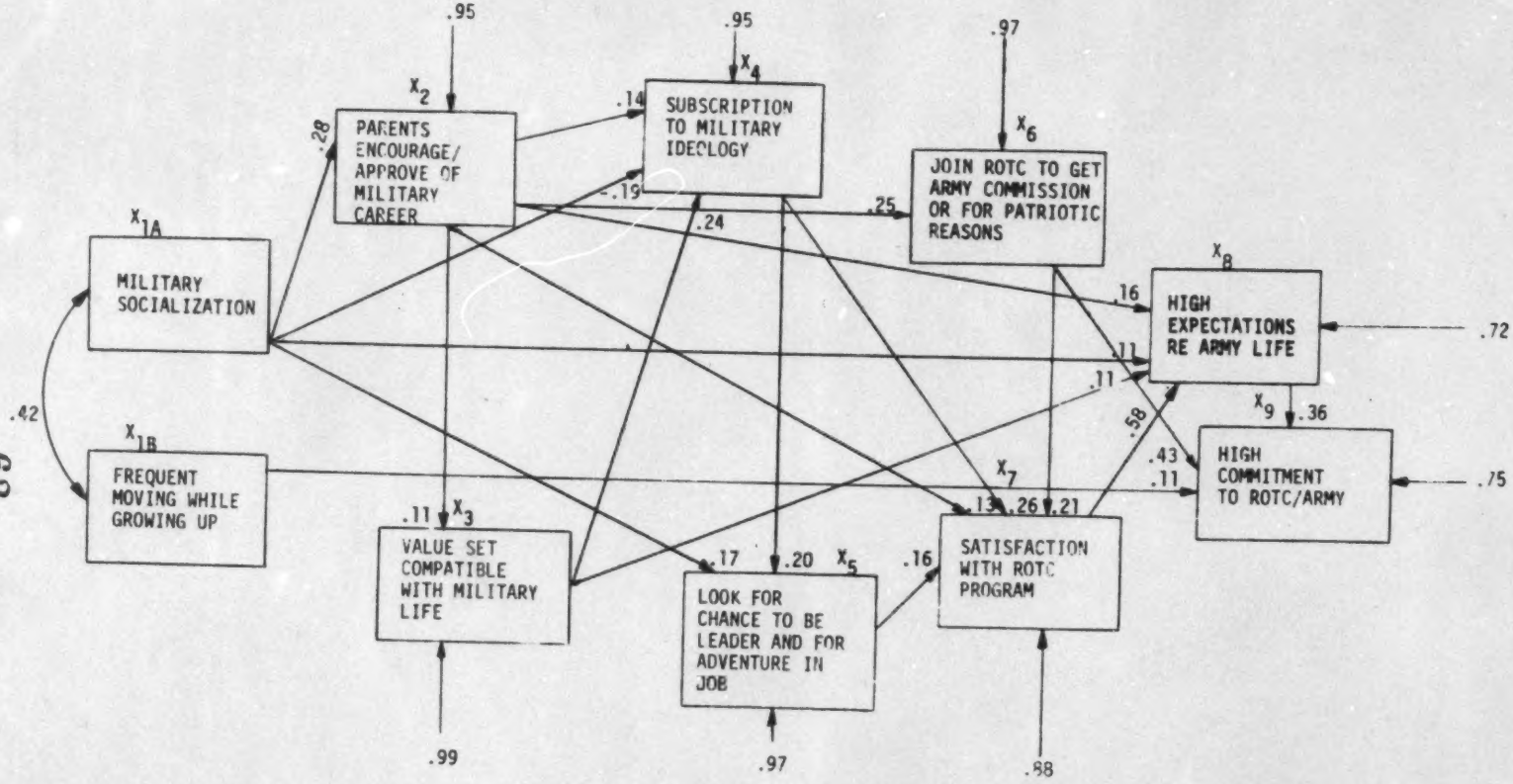

Figure 10. A PATH MODEL OF THE CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS FOR ROTC CADETS WITHOUT ANY BEHAVIORAL OBLIGATION TO THE ARMY. (DATA FROM 338 CADETS IN BASIC ROTC AND WITHOUT A SCHOLARSHIP)

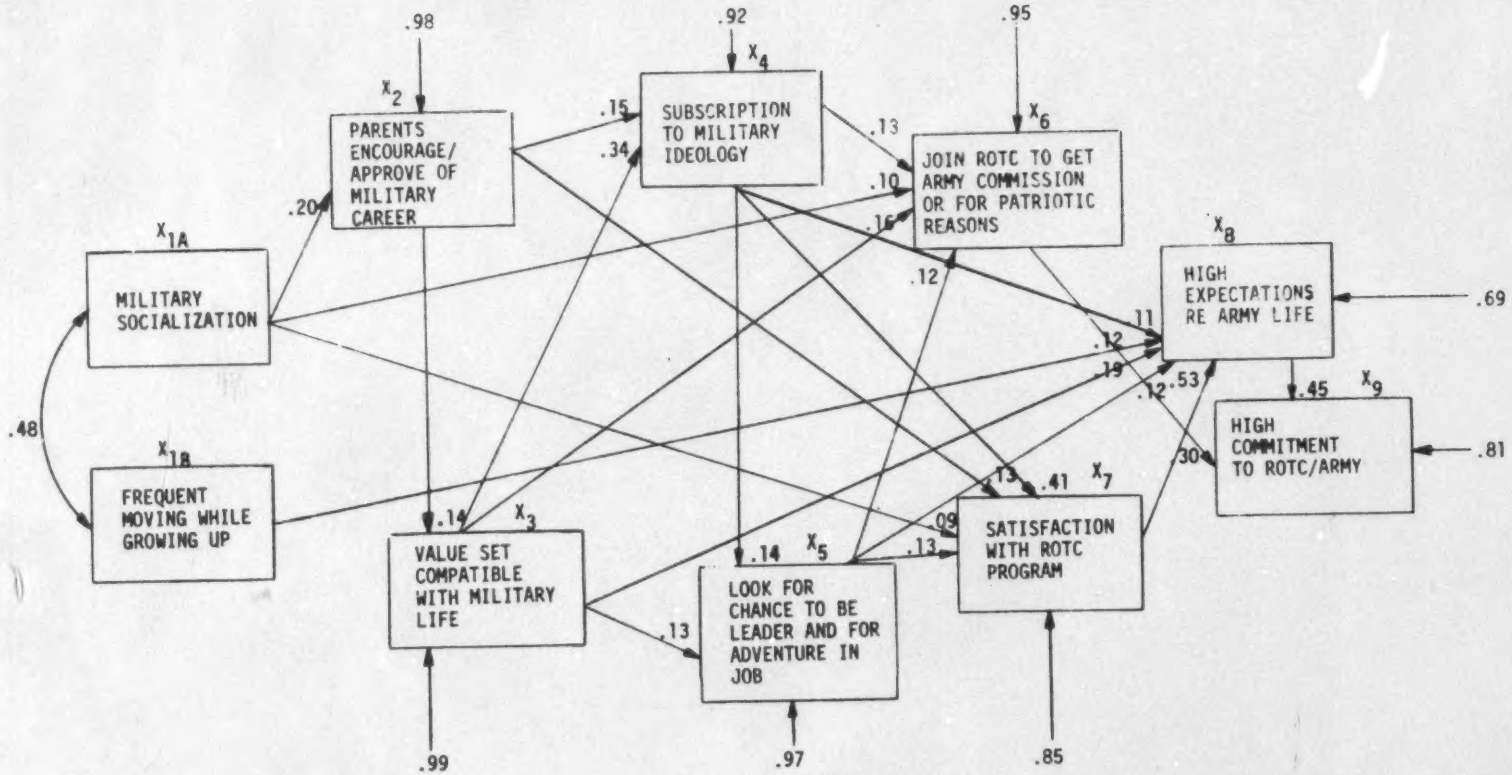

Figure 11. A PATH MODEL OF THE CAREER COMMITMENT PROCESS FOR ROTC CADETS OBLIGATED TO THE ARMY (DATA FROM 369 CADETS IN ADVANCED ROTC)

6. For the Basic ROTC cadets, motivation for joining ROTC was the prime determinant of commitment. For the Advanced ROTC cadets (already behaviorally committed) high expectations of Army life brought about by their ROTC experiences was the most salient determinant.

7. The value and attitude profile variables--value set compatible with military life, subscription to military ideology, and search for chance to be a leader and for adventure in a job--were not relevant to the Basic ROTC cadets' commitment but were very relevant to the Advanced ROTC cadets' commitment.

8. On the other hand the remote primary and secondary variables were more important determinants of commitment among the Basic ROTC students than among the Advanced ROTC students.

9. In general, commitment processes of the Advanced cadets were more similar to those of the officer (especially the White officer) group than were the processes of the Basic ROTC students.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Project Goals and Activities

The goal of the study was to contribute to the state of existing knowledge about the process of career commitment among young Americans, by studying one career path in depth: that of becoming an Army officer via the ROTC route. The major research questions addressed by the study were: Who joins ROTC? Why? Which members of ROTC intend to remain on as career Army officers? Why? What factors in the individual and in his/her home, school, and societal environment increase or decrease commitment to an Army career? How does commitment to ROTC/Army develop in an individual? It was hoped that in the process of answering these questions: (a) the ROTC/Army career commitment process would be more fully understood; (b) a methodology would be developed which other investigators could use in studying other career paths; (c) principles applicable to career commitment in general would emerge; and, (d) recommendations on how ROTC and the Army could be improved to increase members' commitment would be spelled out.

A theoretical model of ROTC/Army career commitment was developed from a review of the literature and from interviews with 135 ROTC cadets and Army officers. The model was designed to be as exhaustive as possible, in order to ensure that the study would encompass all crucial determinants of the career commitment process. The model included nine global factors hypothesized to be related to career commitment in general: (a) the U.S. and world political and socioeconomic context; (b) the school and study program context; (c) individual background and primary socialization factors; (d) individual aptitudes; (e) individual life experiences or secondary socialization conditions; (f) individual values, interests, and aspirations; (g) individual attitudes; (h) information acquired by the individual about the career; and (i) career-related experiences. It also included numerous specific variables under each of these global factors, hypothesized to be operative in the ROTC/Army career commitment process in particular.

The section that follows summarizes the study's major findings, and organizes them into general principles with implications for the process of career commitment to ROTC/Army.

Summary of Project Findings

Participants in a career path differ from non-participants in aptitudes, values, salient attitudes, and dimensions sought in a job.

Evidence. Striking differences between ROTC and non-ROTC college students were found on these sets of characteristics (Chapter 2).

These differences between career path participants and non-participants increase with time.

Evidence. Many more differences were found between ROTC and non-ROTC students at the college than at the high school level, despite the fact that the high school sample was, demographically speaking, more diverse (Chapter 2).

Evidence. Discriminant function analyses conducted to separate the ROTC from the non-ROTC student groups (Chapter 2) performed best for the college juniors and seniors, next best for the college freshmen and sophomores, and least well for the high school seniors.

Evidence. Trend analyses conducted across the early college, late college, and post-college career stages on the value, attitude, and job dimension variable sets (Chapter 4) identified many more significant trends for ROTC/Army career path participants than for the non-ROTC/Army comparison groups.

Different career influences become salient at different career stages.

Evidence. The path analysis of cadet and officer commitment (Chapter 4) showed that remote demographic background variables were most salient at the early college career stage; these gave way to socio-psychological variables (i.e., the match between one's values and job interests and that provided by the career) at the late college career stage and to job-related experiences at the immediate post-college career stage.

Evidence. Parental encouragement was very influential (highly related to participation and commitment) at the high school and college career stages; but was not as influential as *peer* attitudes at the post-college period (Chapters 2 and 3).

Early exposure to a career path increases subsequent participation in and commitment to the career path.

Evidence. A strong career modelling effect was found in the present study, with proportionately more ROTC students and Army officers having military-career fathers than non-ROTC students (Chapter 2). Also, within the ROTC cadet and Army officer groups, those having a military father expressed higher commitment to the ROTC/Army career path than those having a civilian father (Chapter 3).

Evidence. Proportionately more ROTC students than non-ROTC students had relatives (siblings, cousins) in ROTC or the military (Chapter 2).

Evidence. Participation in Junior ROTC (JROTC) was positively related to ROTC/Army career commitment among ROTC college cadets. Attendance at a high school with JROTC was positively related to ROTC/Army commitment among high school students, even when JROTC participants were not included in the computation (Chapter 3).

Evidence. ROTC cadets who decided to join ROTC *before* their sophomore year in college had higher commitment to ROTC/Army than ROTC cadets who decided to join ROTC in their sophomore year (Chapter 3).

Increased family and/or financial responsibilities are correlated with greater career commitment, because these responsibilities make it difficult for an individual to switch careers even at an early career stage.

Evidence. Married ROTC cadets expressed higher commitment to ROTC/Army than single cadets. Married Army officers expressed higher commitment to an Army career than single officers (Chapter 3).

The more intrinsic or free one's initial motivation in exploring the career path, the greater the likelihood of subsequent commitment to the path.

Evidence. Possession of an ROTC scholarship, a strong "extrinsic" motivator, was not related to commitment in any consistent way. At the college ROTC level it was positively related to the overall career commitment scale score but negatively related to some of the individual commitment scale items. At the Army officer level it was unrelated or negatively related to the overall career commitment score and the commitment scale's component items (Chapter 3).

Evidence. The Beliefs about ROTC items which were negatively or insignificantly related to commitment among ROTC cadets and Army officers (Chapter 3) all had to do with the utilization of ROTC as a vehicle for attainment of ends other than an Army commission (to satisfy parents, to earn money in college, to have a good time, to have a guaranteed job after graduation, to postpone decisions about what to do after college). Respondents who agreed that ROTC satisfies these (admittedly positive) instrumental ends did not tend to be high in commitment, presumably because they joined ROTC for the said instrumental ends rather than to truly explore a military career.

There is a sharp barrier between the college career stage and the immediate post-college career stage.

Evidence. Striking differences were found in cadets' vs. officers' responses to the Beliefs about ROTC and Beliefs about the Army items, with cadets' opinions being more positive on almost all items (Chapters 2 and 4). This finding is in line with that of many previous investigators, and is attributable at least in part to disconfirmation of idealistic youthful expectancies by the realistic world of work.

College-stage experiences with a career path influence commitment indirectly, by causing an individual to have high expectations about the post-college career stage. Post-college career-stage experiences influence commitment directly.

Evidence. Path analyses conducted on the data (Chapter 4) showed that cadets' satisfaction with their ROTC program had (only) an indirect effect on their commitment to ROTC/Army (via the high-expectations-about-the-Army route). Army officers' satisfaction with their current job had a strong direct effect on their commitment.

Experiences affect commitment more strongly than expectations.

Evidence. The Beliefs about the Army items correlated with commitment for both the cadet and officer groups, but the magnitude of the correlations was much higher for the officer group (Chapter 3).

The career commitment process is different for different subgroups of the population.

Evidence. Different path analytic models of career commitment emerged for White and Black Army officers (Chapter 4) with White officers'

commitment being determined to a large extent by "intermediate" influences, or predispositions (values, motivations, attitudes) existing at the end of the college career stage; and with Black officers' commitment being determined more directly by either "remote" influences, especially parental encouragement, or by "proximate" influences, especially job experiences.

Implications of Major Findings for the ROTC and Army Programs

Having discussed implications of the present study for understanding the ROTC/Army career commitment process, the discussion now turns to implications of the study for ROTC/Army recruitment, selection, and retention.

Implications for Recruitment

How can the ROTC potential applicant pool be enlarged? The study offers four suggestions, the first two of which deal with recruitment advertising strategies, the last two with recruitment targets or sources:

1. It was found that there were "popular," as well as "good" reasons for joining ROTC, and that these two motivation-sets did not always coincide. (*Popular* reasons are those chosen by the greatest number of cadets as their primary reason for joining ROTC, to wit: an Army commission, the financial benefits accompanying ROTC, the satisfaction or pride it would give one's parents. *Good* reasons are those associated with greatest subsequent commitment to ROTC/Army, to wit: an Army commission, patriotism, job security after graduation.) Recruitment advertising could stress either motivation set, depending on the demand and supply of potential applicants. Thus, during "lean" years, or years when the Army wants to increase the sheer volume of enrollment, recruitment efforts could stress the *popular* reasons for joining. However, during years where potential enrollment figures appear to be sufficient or even in surplus, recruitment efforts could stress the *good* reasons for joining, (good in terms of subsequent retention; ideally, "good" would mean in terms of subsequent *retention* as well as quality *performance*; however, the present study focused only on commitment and not on performance evaluation). Thus, during years when there are sufficient numbers wanting to join ROTC, the Army could stress in its recruitment advertising the opportunity for true career exploration and preparation offered by ROTC, as well as the job security and possible Army commission awaiting one after graduation.

2. It was found that non-ROTC students' misperceptions of ROTC consisted of exaggerating: (a) the extent of obligations cadets take on when they join ROTC; (b) the salary and fringe benefits accompanying membership in ROTC/Army. These findings have implications for recruitment advertising. They suggest that there is no need to stress the fringe benefit package accompanying ROTC/Army, as students are well aware of these benefits (indeed think they are more extensive than they actually are). Rather, one aspect of advertising to stress, or at least point out, is the limited nature of obligations contracted by joining ROTC.

3. It was found that parents are an important influence in shaping career plans, especially during the student career stages, and most especially for the Black subgroup. Thus parents are potentially an important recruitment source, and recruitment efforts could be expanded to focus on them.

4. It was found that commitment to ROTC/Army is lower for suburban than for rural or urban residents. This implies that recruitment efforts will not be as successful in the suburbs as in rural or urban areas.

Implications for Selection

Which individuals have a predisposition to join and be highly committed to ROTC/Army? The demographic, experiential, and socio-psychological profile of such a "good candidate" was presented in Chapters 2 and 3. It must be stressed again that the concept of goodness here refers only to empirical salience to career participation and commitment criteria and not necessarily to either: (a) empirical salience to performance criteria, or (b) salience to an idealized notion of "what a good cadet should be."

The following additional implications for ROTC/Army selection are derivable from the data:

1. It was found that demographic background variables such as race, sex, or socioeconomic status were not nearly as powerful in predicting ROTC/Army participation and commitment as were the socio-psychological variables of values, attitudes, and job needs. Thus selection criteria should *not* focus on demographic variables, except perhaps with the goal of encouraging currently underrepresented groups to apply. Rather, selection criteria should focus on the potent socio-psychological, motivational variables such as favorable military attidues, the search for adventure and for a chance to be a leader in a job, etc.

2. It was found that ROTC students had lower high school and college grades than non-ROTC students. Thus a greater effort should be made to recruit and select students of higher academic ability into ROTC, with the goal of having ROTC students at least on par with their classmates.

3. It was found that proportionately fewer Black ROTC graduates (compared to their White peers) are selected for a Regular Army commission. Despite this underrepresentation in the Regular Army and consequent overrepresentation in the Reserves, Black Army officers have higher commitment to the Army than White officers. Also, Blacks in general, among both the student and officer groups, view ROTC and the Army more favorably than Whites. It may benefit ROTC and the Army to investigate why proportionately more Blacks than White ROTC graduates get funnelled into the Reserves. Do Blacks have poorer grades than Whites? Do they perform more poorly in the ROTC programs? Do factors operate to discriminate against them in Regular Army selection procedures?

Implications for Retention

Finally, data gathered in the present study have implications for how the ROTC and Army programs can be restructured or improved to increase retention rates among cadets and officers.

Implications for Changes in the ROTC Program

1. The dimensions on which ROTC received the least favorable ratings from cadets as well as officers had to do with: (a) the "poor image" of ROTC and ROTC cadets; and (b) the perception among officers and cadets that ROTC does not provide an accurate picture of Army life. The former problem may disappear as the turmoil associated with the Vietnam War recedes from the consciousness of young Americans. If it does not disappear, some effort should be spent determining the exact composition of the poor image, so the problem can be directly addressed.

The latter problem--ROTC not providing an accurate picture of Army life--can probably be attacked by: (a) having ROTC programs include more field and "hands-on experience" activities; and (b) making sure ROTC students are made aware of the problems as well as satisfying experiences awaiting them in the Army (e.g., by means of seminars conducted by young ROTC-graduate Army officers in their period of obligated Army service).

2. It was found that financial benefits and job contracts attract people to ROTC/Army (indeed that the Army would lose 20-40% of its ROTC graduates without these external motivators) but that joining ROTC solely to take advantage of the benefits or joining the Army merely to comply with contractual requirements are correlated with low commitment to ROTC/Army. The social psychological literature contains advice on how to resolve these apparently contradictory matters, for policy purposes. The literature consistently says: if you *must* pay a person to perform a discrepant act (in the present case, if you must offer him/her a financial reward to join ROTC/Army), offer the *minimum* amount necessary to get the person to perform the act. Such minimum reward is associated with the greatest subsequent attitude change, i.e., the greatest reduction in perceived discrepancy of the act with one's true feelings. In the present case, offering of financial benefits large enough to attract the numbers the Army needs to ROTC, but not so large as to be perceived by recipients as the sole reason for their joining, should lead to the greatest subsequent commitment to ROTC/Army. Further research should be conducted to establish what this appropriate "minimum incentive" is.

3. It was found that possession of an ROTC scholarship was inconsistently related to commitment while in college and unrelated to commitment after college (in the period of obligated Army service). This finding implies that the cost-effectiveness of the ROTC scholarship program should be reevaluated carefully.

4. It was found that "late-joiners," or cadets who decided to join ROTC in their sophomore year in college had significantly lower commitment to ROTC/Army than "early-joiners," or cadets who were members of high school JROTC and/or college Basic ROTC. This finding is probably attributable to the fact that the late-joiners are influenced to a larger extent than the early-joiners by the extrinsic motivator of $100/month accompanying membership in Advanced ROTC. ROTC may wish to reconsider its late-joiner option in light of this finding.

Implications for Changes in the Army

1. The dimensions on which an Army officer career received the least favorable ratings (from *all* respondent groups) were: stability of home life,

family contentment, personal freedom, geographic desirability, contribution to society, and utilization of skills. Further research should be undertaken to find out how the Army can better serve its members on these unsatisfactory dimensions.

2. It was found that "independence," or being free to make one's own decisions, was the most important value held by respondents in the sample. Valuing independence, however, was negatively related to both participation in and commitment to the ROTC/Army career path. Are military life and independence inherently contradictory? If not, how can components of the Army be changed to be more responsive to this strongly held American value? Data from the present study indicate that such changes would attract and retain a wider range of individuals in the Army officer corps.

In conclusion then, it is hoped that the present study contributed to understanding commitment to the ROTC/Army career path and to understanding career commitment processes among young Americans in the pre-college, college, and immediate post-college years. In addition, it is hoped that the model and data analytic techniques in the present study will be of help to investigators studying commitment to other, varied career paths of interest.